COVENANTAL PASTORAL AIMINISTRATION

A study of Karl Barth's Understanding of Covenant and its Implication for Effective Pastoral Administration

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ABSTRACT

This paper arises out of the author's belief that many pastors are poor administrators, as witnessed by the great unhappiness reflected on the staffs of overwhelming numbers of churches, by the blurring of the pastors' own sense of job performance, and by the seeming lack of understanding of the pastor-parish relationship.

Part of the problem lies in impersonal structures and pastoral roles. Committee and job descriptions often promote the pastor as an administrative executive whose business, the church, is akin to a multi-armed corporation. This understanding leads not only to ineffective church management, it presents the church as job and task-centered instead of people-centered.

Many postors are looking for a model of pastoral administration which is theologically sound, biblically based, and administratively effective. This paper tries to show how Karl Barth's concept of covenant, with its qualities of openness, intimacy, encounter, forgiveness, and mutuality offers the possibility for an effective and personal pastoral administration. The chapters of this paper spell out the implications for effective administration in Barth's covenantal theology.

Chapter 1 deals exclusively with Barth's theological understanding of the term covenant which is spread over many volumes of his <u>Church-Dogmatics</u>. The attempt to relate covenant to God's sovereignty, creation, humanity, reconciliation and the elected community reflects Barth's own ordering and placement.

Chapter 2 narrows in on Barth's use of I-Thou encounter as the basic form of humanity and gives us a look at the inner working of covenantal being. In that chapter we also get a first glimpse of the covenantal style of pastoral administration which is spelled out in more detail in the last two chapters.

Chapter 3 looks at qualities of covenantal pastoral administration such as teamness in ministry, democratic leadership, mutual trust and support, and forgiveness and tenacity in team relationships. The covenantal relationship that can exist in team ministries works to make possible these qualities in the relationship. Always these positive qualities need to be seen in the light of human sin so that we are looking not just ideally but realistically at human interpersonal dynamics.

Chapter 4 is a look at the consequences of covenantal pastoral administration for the whole congregation. It also considers some factors which limit covenantal relationships at the congregational level.

In general, this study attempts to present one approach to a theology of church management using insights from Barth as well as from modern management theory which is used to augment and illustrate Barth's covenantal theology. Likewise, the references to the discipline of pastoral administration help to establish and ground the thesis in the perspective of pastoral administration.

The methodology used in the composition of this paper has been largely that of library research and theological reflection.

INTRODUCTION

One of the great challenges of the modern pastor is learning the skill of effective parish administration. In addition to the traditional disciplines of preaching, teaching, and pastoral ministry. the clergy are discovering a need to be able to encourage and guide church leaders, coordinate parish programs, promote effective communication, and steer the church into directions of needed concern. As an administrator the pastor is in the unique position to aid or hinder those who center their Christian lives around the church. The pastor's "administrative contacts with people provide an avenue for an application of the message of the pulpit and the classroom; not only an occasion for the acceptance of a challenge by the layman, but also an occasion for the pastor to strive for the growth of the individual."1 Yet, many pastors are poor administrators, as witnessed by the great unhappiness reflected on the staffs of overwhelming numbers of larger churches, by the blurring of the pastor's own sense of job performance. and by the seeming lack of understanding of the pastor-parish relationship. Parish administration "is an essential and valued part of the work of the pastor, for the complex organization of the contemporary church would be chaos without it. H2 Despite this recognized fact, a great deal of evidence indicates that there is frustration and misunderstanding over the role of pastor as church administrator.

Paul E. Irion, "Administrative Efficiency vs. Personal Catastrophe," <u>Pastoral Psychology</u>, VIII (September 1957), 17.

²Ibid.

In an interesting article, Charles W. Stewart shares and comments upon a study by the Institute for Advanced Pastoral Studies who analysed frustrations of a selected number of their pastoral alumni. Most frustrations (35 percent) were related to the pastor's work. "Men felt difficulty in fulfilling various professional functions which they regarded as extremely difficult or unpleasant or unimportant." The second most frequent source of frustration (24 percent) was the indifference, irresponsibility, and lack of integrity among parishioners with whom the pastor worked. Other frustrations included a sense of personal inadequacy in the tasks of ministry (13 percent), and pressures on the minister's family, his salary, and his life style (12 percent), and conflicts in the state of the church itself (8 percent) in which the pastor felt drawn.

An analysis of the data together with other, more subjective commentary by participants in the "Institute for Advanced Pastoral Studies" interview, gave insight into some of the causes which were in back of the frustrations of these Protestant clergy. "The ministers report that they spend a great deal of their time and so much of the week 'running errands,' doing chores, and sitting in that they find little time to do more significant things. Moreover, they feel incompetent in administration. Many say they do not know how to administer an organization effectively." Moreover, pastors resent the feeling

³Charles W. Stewart, "What Frustrates a Minister", Christian Advocate, IX, 1 (January 1965), 9.

⁴Ibid.

that they just "keep the wheels going" and must run to stay ahead of the institution. Many clergy prefer to think of themselves in more traditional pastoral roles rather than those of administrator or church manager.

A classic illustration of this last comment is to be found in the survey by Samuel W. Blizzard in 1956, who defined six major ministerial roles: Administrator, organizer, pastor, preacher, priest, and teacher. 690 seminary graduates who were active clergy were asked to order the six roles according to their importance, enjoyment, and the time spent in each role. The results of the survey are as shown in the following diagram (1=most important, 6=least important):

Role	Importance	Enjoyment	Time Spent
Preacher	1	2	3
Pastor	2	1	1 2
Priest	3	4	4
Teacher	4	3	6
Organizer	5	6	5
Adminiatrator	1 6	5	1

An analysis of the statistics plus more details are given in an editorial in "Encounter" magazine:

Samuel W. Blizzard, "The Minister's Dilemma", Christian Century, IXXIII (April 1956), 508-509.

Gerald L. Jud (ed.) Ex-Pastors: Why Men Leave the Parish Ministry (Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1970), 72

From 480 of the participants, Dr. Blizzard secured a detailed diary of a working day, which averaged not quite ten hours in length. The time was allotted as follows: administrator, nearly two-fifths of the work day; pastor, more than one-fourth; organizer, more than one-tenth; teacher, about one-twentieth.?

The startling and somewhat disconcerting conclusion is that "the minister spends half his time as administrator and organizer, the roles he considers least important, in which he is least effective, and which he least enjoys, and less than one-fifth of it as preacher, the role he rates the highest."

More recent data examining the attitudes of clergy toward the role of administration and other clergy roles is found in two rather interesting books published in the seventies. Ex-Pastors: Why Men Leave the Parish Ministry is a comparison study of 370 ex-pastors of the United Church of Christ and 452 active UCC clergy. While the focus of the book was on why clergy leave the parish, one interesting side issue was a rating of clergy role activities. Both Clergy and exclergy rated preaching and counseling at the top of the list and the catagories of "programming church group activity (organization)" and "conducting meetings (administration)" at the bottom of the list. The following table summarizes the findings concerning high enjoyment of role activities.

R. E. Olson, Editorial, "The Minister's Role as Administrator" Encounter, XVIII (Spring 1957), 188.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Jud. 73.

	NUMBER OF 5 OR 6 RATINGS BY					
	EX-PASTORS			PASTORS		
	No.	Percent	Rank	No.	Percent	Rank
Preaching	76	58.0	2	183	73-2	1
Counseling (Pastor)	95	72.5	1	179	71.6	2
General calling in		22 ()				}
homes (Pastor)	44	33.6 (n	o rank)	116	46.4 (r	o rank)
Helping individual to Christian commitment						
(Priest)	68	51.9	4	169	67.6	3
Teaching adults and			·			
young people (Teacher)	71	54.2	3	155	62.0	4
Serious study (Teacher)	71	54.2	,	128	51.6	4
Judicatory activity	00	0.50	س	~~	20.0	
(Organization)	33	25.2	5	70	27.8	_
Programming church acti- vity (Organization)	28	21.4	5	75	30.0	5
Conducting meetings	~~	~~b ♥ T	,	1)	70.0	
(Organization)	25	19.1	6	<i>5</i> 8	23.2	6

A second study polled 1,353 Methodist pastors as to their first, second, and third most important professional responsibilities. As we might suspect, preaching rated highest and administration of the church rated lowest. The summary table is recorded below. 10

	Total no. of checks	% of 1,353		respon- ality		3rd res- ibilities
Administration of church Pastoral visitation	825	16.5 61.0	19 233	1.4 17.2	204 592	15.1 43.8
Counseling Personal Study Presching & Conduct of	480 670	35•5 49•5	127 267	9.4 19.1	353 403	26.1 29.8
worship Involvement in community	821	60.7	489	36.1	332	24.5
life & problems Teaching & group work	416 520	30.7 38.4	62 128	4.6 9.5	354 392	26.2 29.0

10 Murray H. Leiffer, Changing Expectations and Ethics in the Professional Ministry (Evanston: Garrett Theological Seminary 1971), 134

Three alternatives seem to loom out in response to pastoral frustration over church administration. First, we might fancy ourselves eliminating or side-stepping the function of administration in the church. Perhaps we fantasize a call in which we work freely in an area of ministry, say preaching or teaching, in which we report to no one and no one answers to us. But ministry without the administrative task would be ministry without personal encounter and professional responsibility, and therefore it would not be New Testament ministry.

A second extreme would be a shift in emphasis to administration as the most important aspect of ministry. Certainly one model of ministry touted today is that of the Madison Avenue executive who guides the churchly institution with multifarious programs and gigantic budgets. But this model of ministry is also fraught with the danger of emphasis on program rather than persons. Again, personal encounter and professional responsibility are sacrificed in this extreme model of ministry.

A third alternative would have us seek some middle ground between "administration is nothing" and "administration is everything." The wide-spread frustration with church administration among modern clergy is demanding a new look at pasteral administration with a view to finding a realistic and satisfactory understanding of the term.

"Dr. Elizzard says that there is no biblical and traditional definition of administration, as there is of preaching, teaching, worship, and, to a degree, of pastoral care." Clearly, the church needs to formulate a theology of pastoral administration.

¹¹01son. 189.

In a preliminary sense, what might a theology of pastoral administration look like? Such a theology would give pastoral administration perspective. Administration is a vital aspect of Christian ministry. The church is an institution with physical needs. "It is not an ethereal spiritial society, exempt from the necessities of life in this world. like the Christ of the Docetists. We must take seriously the order of creation and the meaning of incarnation." In such a schema "administration is not a necessary evil: it is a 'necessary good. 1113 But administration is not THE GOOD. The functions of preaching, teaching, pastoral care, and worship are not to be sacrificed, but rather, enhanced through the administrative functions. Administration is thus a means to ministry. A theology of administration must take into account the role of the laity--not passively and secondarily, but actively and with co-equality. Such a theology is person oriented. Goals, committees, and programs are a means of serving the needs of persons. In such an atmosphere a pastor sees the administrative task "not as a manipulation of people into a desired program, but as an opportunity to lead his parishioners into a fuller relationship with Jesus Christ through their common task fulfilled."14

It is my belief that Karl Barth's understanding of covenant could provide an effective avenue for a model of ministry which is not only effective in the administrative sense, but which is

¹²Olson, 189. 13 Ibid.

¹⁴Paul Minnich Robinson, "New Trends in Church Administration: a Survey", Brethern Life and Thought, VIII (Autumn 1963), 58.

theologically and Biblically sound. There are several reasons why I think this is so: First. Barth's concept of covenant addresses the heart of the gospel because the manifestation of covenant is really an expression of God's free act of grace to be with and for humanity. Grounded in eternity in the Godhead, covenant is natural to God who desires that we be in conenvantal relationship to him. Thus. Earth's doctrine of creation is tightly bound to his view of covenant. Covenant is the internal basis of creation, just as creation is the external basis of covenant. God's own being, his relationship to Israel and fulfillment in Christ for all persons, stands as an example of his will and way for human society and individual human beings. Covenant, thus viewed, becomes a critique of all human institutions and all instances of human encounter. The institution of the church, as bearer of the Good News, stands powerfully under this critique. And the encounter among Christians, especially those engaged in ministry and fellowship, are likewise under the critique of Barth's theology of covenant. Barth's concept has qualities of contemporaniety, openness, intimacy, forgiveness, relationship to community, and tenacity. It is non-parenalistic and is grounded in creation, expressed in history and pointed in hope to the future. By bringing Barth's theology of covenant to the discipline of pastoral administration, our understanding of ministry will be enriched and deepened, and our effectiveness as administrators will be greatly enhanced.

We will proceed with the task of this paper first by explaining in some detail what Barth understands by the concept of covenant. We shall look at a way in which covenant stands as a critique of all human institutions, including and especially the church. Next we will look at the inside of covenant, at encounter, in the form of I-Thou.

Using insights from modern management theory and pastoral administration to augment and illustrate I-Thou encounter in the administrative setting, we will disclose the meaning of pastoral administration as intimate encounter. Next, we will study administrative pastoral leadership in collegial administration and examine the quality of relationship in staff ministries. Finally, we will want to look at the consequences of covental leadership and style for the life of the congregation.

We will bring Barth's understanding of covenant to the discipline of institutional and ecclesiastical management. Our desire is to present one approach to a theology of church management. The methodology used in the composition of this paper is largely that of library research and theological reflection.

Chapter I

BARTH'S UNDERSTANDING OF COVENANT

An effective theology of pastoral administration must have, as a central concern, a sensitivity to the way human beings relate to God ad to each other. It is noted that "religious beliefs often serve to define the total arena within which actions are viewed and assessed. The total arena in Barth's case is the covenant." Our aim in this chapter is to disclose what covenant is and means for Barth and how it can be used as a tool for viewing the actions and assessing the styles of pastoral administration. As this activity takes place, we can also begin to see the practical and theoretical implications for a covenantal theology of pastoral administration begin to develop in subsequent chapters.

Covenant is the Old Testament term which describes the basic relationship between God and his people. It is not certain whether the root meaning of covenant (in Hebrew, 'berith') is "'circumcision' as a sacrifical ceremony, or 'binding' as a binding of the will of the covenant partner, or a 'meal' as the ratification of the ceremony." Some scholars have also linked the Hebrew 'barah' (choice) with covenant. In any case, the word denotes a legal ritual of mutual obligation between parties or partners. The concept of covenant which unfolds in

¹Gene Outka, <u>Agape: An Ethical Analysis</u> (New Haven: Yale University Press 1972), 242.

²Karl Barth, <u>Church Dogmatics</u> (Edinburgh: Clark 1949-69). Due to its use as the extensive primary source for this inquiry, the references to <u>Church Dogmatics</u> will be abbreviated as "volume number, part number and page number." This footnote is IV, 1, 22.

the Bible is far richer than a mere legalistic relationship, but it is nevertheless radically relational. God relates to himself, covenantally. God in Christ wills to relate to humankind as a covenant-partner. And to be human is to live with others so that the relational nature of humanity is intrinsically natural and normal -- a determined factor in the reality of human existence. Covenantal being issues out of God's free, loving desire that he and all his creatures would be enclosed in covenantal inner-connection. It is with the Barthian view of God as "the being who loves in freedom" that we rightfully begin our inquiry into his understanding of covenant.

A. Covenant and God's Sovereignty

God is the one who loves in freedom. This view to God is revealed to humanity through Jesus Christ, the one through whom God establishes "fellowship between Himself and us, and...loves us." It will be important to examine the centrality of Jesus Christ, but prior to God's revelation of himself to us through Jesus, God is the loving One free within himself. Classical theology has noted the richness of God's being through his divine attributes or perfections. Barth "depicts the reality of God as love in terms of his perfections of grace and holiness, mercy and righteousness...patience and wisdom." The God who has grace, mercy, and patience is "one, constant, and eternal in himself and in all his works." These latter perfections

^{311. 1. 257}

David L. Mueller, <u>Karl Barth</u> (Waco, TX: Word, 1972), 95. 5Ibid.

reveal that God's "freedom is the freedom of His love." In this light Barth develops his thesis that God's acts are acts done in loving freedom.

The God we know in Jesus Christ is free and loving, a God of the forenamed divine perfections. Even if there were no others beside him, he would still be a God of loving freedom. But God, in his innermost being, willing, and nature has chosen to stand in relationship to his people. God has chosen though, to be in relationship first, with himself, in an intertrinitarian way.

The Father and Son are the two poles; the Holy Spirit is the event or action which happens between them. No aspect can be separated from another. The Father and Son are defined by the action of the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit is the action between the Father and the Son. So the covenantal structure, dialogically and dialectically understood, is the structural-event, the action-relationship of God in himself.⁸

But God has also chosen to relate to humanity. "Though God could exist alone unto himself without either man or world, he has chosen nevertheless man!" It is important to Barth's relational understanding of God's nature and therefore to covenantal being, that we observe this important dimension of his relationality.

⁶II. 1. 441.

^{7&}lt;sub>II</sub>, 2, 6.

Stuart D. McLean, "The Humanity of Man in the Thought of Karl Barth," unpublished paper (Fall, 1976), 27.

John H. Morgan, "Karl Barth in Pursuit of God's Humanity,"

<u>Religion in Life</u>, XLV (Autumn 1976), 332.

To be truly Christian, the doctrine of God must carry forward and complete the definition and exposition of the Subject God. It must do this in such a way that quite apart from what must be said about the knowledge and reality of God as such, it makes the Subject known as One which in virtue of its innermost being, willing and nature does not stand outside all relationships, but stands in a definite relationship, 'ad extra' to another. 10

Thus when we speak of God we must speak of him in consideration of his free and loving act to be in relationship to others.

The particular way that God has chosen to relate to humankind is through Jesus Christ. Jesus "is indeed God in His movement towards ...the people represented in the one man, Jesus of Nazareth, in His covenant with his people, in his being and activity amongst and towards this people." This act of God is an act of his divine sovereignty which demonstrates God's mercy and righteousness, constancy and omnipotence.

It is as the Lord who loves in the fulness of these perfections that God acts when He institutes and directs this covenant. He constitutes Himself the Lord of the covenant. He is, therefore, its free author. He gives it its content and determines its order. He maintains it. He directs it to its goal. He governs it in every respect. It is His decision that there is a covenant-partner. It is also His decision who the partner is, and what must befall him. It is only as He wills it that the covenant arises at all. The covenant-member is the one whom He ordains. 12

Before we examine how God acts for humanity in Jesus Christ, we need to pause before the fact of God's sovereign decision to be "God for humankind." Because God is sovereign there are certain implications in Barth's covenantal theology.

One implication in God's decision to be a covenant-partner of humanity is that we will perceive this decision as an act of pure grace

¹⁰II, 2, 5 & 6. ¹¹II, 2, 7. ¹²II, 2, 9.

matter of grace, that to which God has freely and sovereignly bound
Himself. It is the final word about the nature and destiny of every
man."¹³ In the section of Church Dogmatics on "election" Barth makes
clear the point that grace is "the beginning of all the ways and works
of God."¹⁴ Indeed, we are not elected to intercourse with God, because
of the virtue of our humanity as though we deserved such preference.
We are elected to covenant-partnership through God's grace alone. Our
end of the relationship is undeserved and unearned. It is a gift given
to us from the God who is lovingly gracious. God is therefore the
initiator of the covenant-partnership and wills to uphold it from his
side. God's grace is so predominant that "to speak of God, says Barth,
is to speak of God for man...to speak of God's 'existence', his
'intercession', and his 'activity for man.'"

If the human partner is the recipient of the gift of God's graceful decision to be the covenant-partner, then it also follows that the only authentic human response to God's sovereign decision is to accept the gift with gratitude. To be sure, human history attests to the tragic way God's offer of covenant-partnership has been rejected, but we must simply affirm that the <u>authentic</u> response to God's decision to make us his partner is to be grateful! "Real man (i.e., one who has been redeemed by God and who lives in the verticle relationship with him)...thanks God for His grace by knowing Him as God, by enjoying freedom from Him and to Him...He is the covenant-partner of God." 16

¹³Outka, 242. ¹⁴II, 2, 3. ¹⁵Morgan, 326 ¹⁶III, 2, 203.

Another implication in God's decision to be our covenantpartner is that the sovereign God will not reneg on his promise. Thus, in the face of human sin, covenant has the character of atonement. We will spell out those implications in detail later, but for now we simply note that God's sovereign will is not ultimately frustrated. Because the decision to be covenant-partners was not initiated by humankind, the attempts by human beings to pervert or destroy the covenant of God will be ultimately futile. Covenantal being corresponds to the eternal nature of God and not the capricious nature of human beings. It therefore has the tenacity of being bound into God's sovereign grace and not humanity's sinful nature. Covenant has the character of atonement 17 because we see it in God's activity to renew the covenant; atonement though is really the fulfillment of the covenant18 and through atonement we come to see "that God realizes His eternal will with man, that He makes the covenant true and actual within human history."19

B. Covenant and Creation

God's purpose from the beginning is seen in creation where he makes a place and sets forth a time for the unfolding of the covenantal relationship between the Father and the Son, between God and humanity.

"God's act of creation is the first of his works which from eternity are directed toward the realization of his saving purpose."

Jesus Christ

¹⁷IV, 1, 68. ¹⁸IV, 1, 69. ¹⁹IV, 1, 69. ²⁰Mueller, 111.

is the eternal Word of God, one with Him in eternity and as such shares in the act of creation. For Barth, God the Creator and his work of creation cannot be understood apart from Jesus Christ. The whole "purpose and therefore the meaning of creation is to make possible the history of God's covenant and its culmination in Jesus Christ." To make this point, Barth develops a twofold thesis relating covenant and creation to the sovereign will of God. The thesis is (1) that creation provides the external basis of God's covenant of grace with humanity and (2) that this covenant of grace is the internal basis of creation. ²²

Barth maintains in his doctrine of election that "from eternity God foreordained that he would become man in Jesus Christ in order to reconcile sinful man with himself." Again, we start our discussion of covenant and creation with the sovereign God who loves in freedom.

The election of grace is the eternal beginning of all the ways and works of God in Jesus Christ. In Jesus Christ God in His free grace determines Himself for sinful man and sinful man for Himself. He therefore takes upon Himself the rejection of man with all its consequences, and elects man to participation in His own glory. 24

Because the election of grace has an eternal beginning in God, Barth takes strong exception to past theologies which tended to see the advent of Christ as a "wretched expedient" in the face of human sin. To be sure, sin is very real and the cross is absolutely central, but God's saving grace is present even in the act of creation. Thus Barth responds to the Federal Theologians and Coccejus by asking, "Why instead

²¹III, 1, 42. ²²III, 1, 42-329. ²³Mueller, 111. ²⁴II. 2, 94.

was the grace of God made a second or a third thing, a wretched expedient of God in face of the obvious failure of a plan in relation to man which had originally had quite a different intention and form?"25 No. God's grace is present in the act of creation. Creation has a purpose —it makes covenant "technically" possible. "It prepares and establishes the sphere in which the institution and history of the covenant take place...it makes possible the subject which is to be God's partner in this history."26 The Biblical basis for "creation as the external basis of covenant" is seen in Barth's exegesis of Genesis 1:1-2:4a, the cosmic creation narrative.

The second major thesis relating covenant and creation is developed around the opening verses of the second creation narrative, Genesis 2:4b-25, and is expressed in the thought, "covenant is the internal basis of creation." The internal basis of creation "consists in the fact that the wisdom and omnipotence of God the Creator was not just any wisdom and omnipotence but that of his free love." What God created was not just any place, not just any reality, not just any subject—the place was created as the unfolding arena for His covenant; the reality would be "intrinsically determined as the exponent of His glory and for the corresponding service;" the subject would become God's covenant—partner in history. 30

^{25&}lt;sub>IV</sub>, 1, 64. 26_{III}, 1, 97. ²⁷_{III}, 1, 228-329.

²⁸III. 1. 231. ²⁹Ibid. ³⁰Ibid.

Even though covenant as the internal basis of creation follows the section of creation as the external basis of covenant, Barth intends us to view it as having an ontological priority.

The fact that the covenant is the goal of creation is not something which is added later to the reality of the creature, as though the history of creation might equally have been succeeded by any other history. It already characterizes creation itself and as such, and therefore the being and existence of the creature. The covenant whose history had still to commence was the covenant which, as the goal appointed for creation and the creature, made creation necessary and possible, and determined and limited the creature.

Mueller makes this point in another way: "Creation preceeds the beginning of the covenant in point of time, but the latter preceeds and is the presupposition of creation within the divine purpose." 32

God's sovereign act of creation set forth not only a place for the unfolding of his glory, it created the time in which to do it. The covenantal relationship between God and humanity takes place in history. "The aim of creation is history" 33 whereby the Creator acts and reveals himself as God for humanity out of his love. Thus "the covenant of grace is the theme of history." History reveals not only the theme of the covenant of grace, 35 it reveals God's free and ever renewed action to love humanity—it reveals God's act of reconciliation. "Reconciliation is the fulfillment of the covenant." True history, the history which determines all other history is the action of God to uphold the covenantal relationship with humanity wherein he"becomes and is man in Jesus Christ, and as such He acts and speaks to reconcile the

^{31&}lt;sub>III</sub>, 1, 231. 32_{Mueller}, 112. 33_{III}, 1, 59.

³⁴III, 1, 60. 35Ibid. 36McLean, 25.

world to Himself, because he has bound Himself to man by the creation of heaven and earth and all things, because He cannot tolerate that this covenant should be broken, because He wills to uphold and fulfill it even though it is broken." Thus the theme of history is God's covenant of grace but "the history of salvation is the history." Because He wills to uphold and fulfill it even though it is broken. Thus the theme of history is God's covenant of grace but "the history of salvation is the history." Because He wills to uphold and history. Humanity's authentic response to God's choice is thankfulness. "Thus grace (God's action) and thanksgiving (man's action) describes the dialectical-dialogical interplay between God and man which Barth calls history. Only in this history is man free to act anew. This happens archtypically and essentially in Jesus Christ, but secondarily in ourselves." 39

In his exegesis and commentary on Genesis 2:18-25, Barth discloses some of what it means for human beings to be in covenant with God and with each other. The implications for effective pastoral administration abound in this section. Let us therefore briefly consider the treatment of "the completion of the creation of man by the adding to the male of the female."

Exegeting the verses of this passage in Genesis, Barth first examines the meaning of "It is not good that the man should be alone" (Genesis 2:18b RSV) and "but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him" (Genesis 2:20b RSV). He says that a completion of creation takes place with the addition of female to male. "Everything aims at one fact, to wit, that God did not create man alone, as a single human

³⁷J. L. Scott, "The Covenant in the Theology of Karl Barth", Scottish Journal of Theology, XVII, 3 (June 1964), 193.

^{38&}lt;sub>III</sub>, 1, 60. 39_{McLean}, 26. 40_{III}, 1, 288.

being, but in the unequal duality of male and female."⁴¹ Humankind is not to be viewed in solitariness but rather in relationship. Neither monk, nor hermit, nor the pastor who administrates out of a vacuum would be acting properly or effectively if they acted alone, for "in isolation man would not have been good. That is, he would not have been created good. He would not have been the being with whom God later willed to enter into relationship."⁴²

Humanity was created for the purpose of being in covenantpartnership with God who is Himself not solitary but is in partnership internally. Therefore, "to be God's partner in this covenant, man himself needed a partner."43 The partner must resemble but be different from him. "If it were only like him, a repetition, a numerical multiplication, his solitariness would not be eliminated, for it would not confirmt him as another but he would merely recognize himself in it."44 But if the other were not essentially like him--as was the case of the animals of creation--his solitariness would still be there because the other would be basically different. Thus "to be created good, man needs a being like him and yet different from him, so that in it he will recognize himself but not only himself, since it is to him a Thou as truly as he is an I, and he is to it a Thou as truly as it is an I. 45 It is in the natural pluralism of the I-Thou human duality that God will confront humanity. This I-Thou relationship is really an "anticipation...of what the form of God's relationship to it will be in the

^{41&}lt;sub>III</sub>, 1, 288. 42_{III}, 1, 289. 43_{III}, 1, 290

coming covenant between them."46

But in order for humanity to be ready for the gift of covenantal relationship with God, an expression of God's grace, the female, must be given to the male and their relationship must also be given by Yahweh. Moreover, their relationship must have qualities that lift up the eternal covenant relationship which God wills for his people. Barth interprets the whole passage of Genesis 2:21-24 in the light of these considerations. The meaning of the man's deep sleep is that he did not participate in the creation of the woman. She comes as a gracious gift of God to the man and comes not as his inferior but in equality as another of God's human creatures. Moreover, Yahweh presents her to the man and the man is allowed the freedom to accept or reject the gift of her companionship. In presenting her to the man. Yahweh "creates not only the I and Thou, man and woman, but also their mutual relationship."47 In letting her be freely accepted by him. Yahweh was ordaining their mutual integrity and freedom in association.

She was to become to him in his own recognition what she really is, and to be acknowledged and welcomed as such by his own free word. The recognition of the I in the Thou which rests on this recognition is possible only in freedom, and it is by a free word that this recognition must be revealed as a responsible decision. 48

In their encounter of I-Thou "association gives way to fellowship.

There is choice and therefore personal relationship." Without freedom, honest encounter, and mutual acceptance of each other, the element of

⁴⁶III, 1, 290. ⁴⁷III, 1, 298. ⁴⁸III, 1, 292.

⁴⁹III. 1. 300.

personal relationship would have been impossible. We shall want to come back to this "encounter atmosphere" which is marked by freedom, mutual acceptance, non-paternal equality before the relationship, and mutual integrity of persons when we examine the pastor as administrator.

In the Genesis passage and occasionally in Scripture such as Song of Songs, the <u>eros</u> relationship is seen in a strong and bonded covenant between two persons. But the Old Testament speaks more often of broken covenants which need mending. A great illustration is offered in Hosea where the wife (Israel) goes whoring to the agony of her husband (Yahweh); or prophetically "Yahweh is seen as the Lover, Bridegroom, and Husband. Nor do the prophets fail to make this continuity plain in spite of their discord." But it is precisely here that a glorious, tenacious, forgiving quality of God's covenantal nature is modeled for:

we have to reckon with the unfaithfulness of the wife, but never with the unfaithfulness of the Husband. We have to reckon with her rejection and abandonment, but not with a bill of divorce. If the one partner has forgotten the days of her youth, the other has not forgotten them. The call for her return, and above all the assurance of His love and faithfulness, are not abrogated.51

This tenacious, forgiving quality is focused all the more in the light of the New Testament.

The study of "covenant as the internal basis of creation" is brought to a conclusion in the comparison of Old and New Testaments where the New Testament is the fulfillment of the Old. The Old Testament looks for "a betrothal in justice and righteousness, in kindness

⁵⁰111, 1, 316. ⁵¹111, 1, 316-317.

and compassion" 52 which finds its true fulfillment in the God-man, Jesus Christ. Moreover,

when the Old Testament gives its dignity to the sexual relationship, it has in view its prototype, the divine likeness of man as male and female which in the plan and election of God is primarily the relationship between Jesus Christ and His Church, secondarily the relationship between Yahweh and Israel, and only finally—although very directly in view of its origin—the relationship between the sexes.⁵³

The internal basis of creation is therefore most properly, Jesus Christ and His Church. In Him we see not only the covenant but the fulfill-ment of covenant in Christ's supreme act of reconciliation. The disruption of covenant revealed both in Yahweh/Israel and male/female points us to the depth of covenant between God and man:

which in the plan and election of God already included the surrender and death of His Son, which could be accomplished only at this cost, in which God and man, and God and the two sexes, confront each other as do Jesus Christ and his followers to the extent that Jesus Christ had to be offered up for their sins and to die for their reconciliation with God. 54

Because of the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ, humanity can say "Yes" to God. In the section of <u>Church Dogmatics</u> entitled "The Yes of God the Creator", Barth shows us that "the existence and reality of creation and the creature are good as created, actualized, and justified by God." 55 The essence of this important point is clearly stated by Barth:

God the Creator did not say No, nor Yes and No, but Yes to what He created. There is, of course a divine No as well: the necessary rejection of everything which by His own nature God cannot be; and consequently the necessary rejection of everything which again by his own nature God cannot will and create, and cannot even tolerate

⁵²III, 1, 319. ⁵³III, 1, 322. ⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵Mueller, 113.

as a reality distinct from Himself. But the power of this twofold No is only the recoil of his equally twofold Yes. His Yes to Himself and to the reality which, although not identical with Him, was willed and created by Him. 50

Humanity can say "Yes" to covenental being with God because the Creator has willed and affirmed humankind as his creature and has ordained that we should be his covenant partner through Jesus Christ.

Again, this has its basis in covenant and fulfillment in reconciliation.

It is now in order to look at the marks of covenantal being for humanity as the covenant-partner with God and with itself.

C. Covenant and Humanity

A theology of church administration which is based upon Barth's covenantal understanding will want to make use of the issues and features which were seen in the unfolding of the previous section, "Covenant as the Internal basis of Creation". What is true of that section applies equally to the material in Volume III, Part 2 of the Church Dogmatics where Barth unfolds his anthropology, the thrust of which was anticipated as early as 1932 in the first volume of Dogmatics. Barth wrote, "There is a way from Christology to anthropology. There is no way from anthropology to Christology." 57 Theology should reflect the Word of God and focus on the relationship of God and humankind, and man (humanity) and man (humanity). "Jesus Christ reveals these relationships and thus becomes normative for understanding both man and God." 58 Hence the theology which preceeds anthropology is a Christology for

^{56&}lt;sub>III</sub>, 1, 331. 57_I, 1, 148. 58_{McLean}, 32.

"in theological anthropology what man is, is decided by the primary text, i.e., by the humanity of the man Jesus." 59

The true perception of humanity is not to be seen in scientific understanding. The scientific approach (e.g., physics, psychology, sociology, biology) is not concerned with the being of humankind, but with outward appearances, with phenomonology. Likewise, philosophical theories on the nature of humankind which proceed from speculative theories, fail to see the quintessence of humanity if they fail to see the covenantal relationship with God. "Real man lives with God as His covenant-partner. For God has called him to participate in the history in which God is at work with him and he with God, to be His partner in this common history of the covenant." 60 The covenantal relationship is a sweeping thing which "undergirds and conditions all other dimensions of man."61 In my opinion a theory of church administration or any other study which requires an understanding of human nature which excludes this basic relationship, distorts the correct perception of humanity. For example, Barth says that the godless perception of humanity "gropes past him (the human) into the void. It grasps only the sin in which he breaks the covenant with God and denies and obscures his true reality, "62 viz., that we are created to be and through God's sovereign grace are his covenant-partners.

To argue that theology preceeds anthropology, to affirm that the

⁵⁹III, 2, 226. ⁶⁰III, 2, 203. ⁶¹McLean, 32.

⁶²III. 2. 203.

true nature of humanity is seen in Jesus Christ, and to acknowledge that we are God's covenant-partners is a radical departure from both 19th century Liberalism and modern Fundamentalism. In the former, the stress was on discovering the divine in the human; in the latter, the emphasis on sin seems to taint what Barth would view as the true understanding of humanity, viz., that "we must regard him (the human) from above, from God" and not from below. The direction of Barth's argument leads us now to consider the implications of his Christology wherein Jesus Christ "is the source of our knowledge of the nature of man as created by God." 64

In order to discover "real man"--that is, the person "whose soul and body, man-man relationship (humanity) and God-man relationship" is fulfilled, 65 we look not to sinful persons but to Jesus Christ.

Jesus is divine because God acts directly and immediately in him; he is human because he is "the true creaturely form of man, i.e., the form of I-Thou human relationship. 66 What God intends human nature to be is disclosed in Jesus' human nature though we must guard against a simple equasion of our nature with the nature of Jesus. Jesus expresses human nature perfectly whereas all other men do so imperfectly... Nevertheless, the fact that we share a common humanity with Jesus means that we may learn 'indirectly' what constitutes human nature in general,

⁶³III, 2, 304.

Stuart D. McLean, "The Humanity of Man in Karl Barth's Thought," Scottish Journal of Theology, XXVIII, 2 (April 1975), 167.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 127. 66Ibid.

by looking at his human nature."67

The divinity of Jesus consists in the fact that God exists immediately and directly in him; that he is the divine Savior in whom God's glory is triumphant; he and he alone is the living Word of God in human form; and He is in the activity of God's grace. In short, "He is man for God." 69

But Jesus is also human as well as divine and as we have said before, his humanity is the clue to true, authentic humanness. The humanity of the man Jesus means that he is the <u>true</u> creaturely expression of humanity in the I-Thou form. It should further be noted that the I-Thou relational form is posited not only in human relationships but also in three different encounter relationships, viz., the encounter with God himself (God with God), the encounter between God and human-kind (God/man), and between human beings (man/man). The I-Thou relational forms, properly understood, are covenantal in nature.

The first of these forms, ontologically speaking, is <u>God with</u> <u>God</u>. The eternal I-Thou relational form is expressed in encounter in God's trinitarian nature. As Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God "posits Himself, is posited by Himself, and confirms Himself in both respects, as His own origin and goal." As loving God, he dispenses and receives love eternally and is eternal love. In relational encounter "He is the origin and source of every I and Thou, of the I which is

^{67&}lt;sub>Mueller</sub>, 114. 68_{III}, 2, 207. 69_{Ibid}.

⁷⁰III, 2, 218.

eternally from and to the Thou and therefore supremely I."⁷¹ Whatever more we wish to say about the I-Thou encounter and about covenantal being, we begin with the fact of its grounding in the very nature of God. Barth says further that the I-Thouness of God is present in God's covenant relationship with humanity. "It is this relationship in the inner divine being which is repeated and reflected in God's eternal covenant with man as revealed and operative in time in the humanity of Jesus."⁷²

The second form is <u>God with Man</u>. The eternal I-Thou relational form of God reaches out to the temporal I-Thou relational form of "man-with-man" via the God-man, Jesus Christ. The I-Thou relationship found in the encounter of Jesus with others is unique and significant to Barth's thought. Jesus is <u>for</u>, <u>from</u>, <u>to</u>, and <u>with</u> his fellow human beings.

Jesus is first, the man <u>for</u> cthers; <u>for</u> them in a radically committed way that no other human is or ever has been. But his forness points both to his divinity and humanity. "If the divinity of Jesus is to be described comprehensively in the statement that he is man for God, His humanity can and must be described no less succinctly in the proposition that He is man for man, the other men, his fellows." Jesus humanness is what ours should be because "in the light of the man, Jesus, man is the cosmic being which exists absolutely for its fellows." ⁷⁴

^{71&}lt;sub>III</sub>, 2, 218. 72_{Ibid}. 73_{III}, 2, 208. 74_{Ibid}.

The formess of Jesus is not to be understood as easily accomplished and dispensed mechanically from God. Jesus must be seen and understood in a dynamic, relational interaction with his fellows. Jesus is from them in the sense that the "I" of Jesus is effected by the "Thou" of others. "Jesus has to let His being, Himself, be prescribed and dictated and determined by an alien being (that of his more near and distant fellows) and by the need and infinite peril of this being."75 (Note: Barth must mean by alien, alien because people are in sin and hence less than fully human in character; in peril because of their fallen state, which subjects them to divine judgment.) He is to them in that his "I" comes to their "Thou" and "gives Himself freely to them." 76 He is with his people too. Barth powerfully enjoins this point saying. "If we see Him alone, we do not see Him at all." 77 The radical character of the withness of Jesus is that of "a supreme I wholly determined by and to the Thou." 78 Here we see the essence of involvement and service to humanity. In terms of covenantal encounter, we see in Jesus a committedness to the other, a "fromness" which is willing to be effected, a "to-ness" willing to confront, a "withness" willing to address the other, and a "forness" able to serve fully.

The encounter of God-with-God and God-with-man correspond and are similar to but not identical with the encounter of human with human, (man-with-man) to which we now turn.

^{75&}lt;sub>III</sub>, 2, 213, 214. 76_{Ibid}. 77_{Ibid}.

⁷⁸111, 2, 216.

The temporal I-Thou relational form is that which occurs in human encounter and Barth terms it "man with man." In the God-with-God encounter, both the I and Thou confront each other fully and genuinely. In the God-with-man encounter, the genuine I of the man Jesus is confronted with a less than genuine Thou of his fellows and the reverse is also true--the fully responsive Thou of the man Jesus is met with a less than fully receptive I of his fellows. In the "man-with-man" encounter, neither I nor Thou is fully, totally, genuinely committed to the relationship. That is why, when Barth maintains there is correspondence and similarity between the three encounters and between God and humankind generally, he argues that the correspondence and similarity is "analogia relationis" and not "analogia entis"--ie., "there is a disparity between the relationship of God and humankind and the prior relationship of the Father to the Son and the Son to the Father, of God Himself." The disparity is that the being of God and of humanity cannot be compared except by analogy of correspondence and similarity of relations. And yet. having said that the I-Thou of human encounter is incapable of full genuineness. Barth in no way is asking us to give up the attempt at deep encounter. To be human is to be with the other. "I cannot be I without accepting this claim of the other, without letting him come to me, and therefore without hearing him. It is a matter of satisfying my vital need, in which I should necessarily sink if I remained alone. 80 I need you to complete myself; you need me to complete yourself.

^{79111, 2, 216.}

^{80&}lt;sub>III, 2, 258</sub>.

Here we should make note that many theologians prefer to develop the "doctrine of man" as "imago Dei" by noting the characteristics and qualities of humanity in being, freedom, community, etc.

Barth argues that the "imago Dei" of humanity is most precisely to be seen at the point of humankind's relational being and activity. Barth feels so strongly that the relational defines humanity that he rules as catagorically insignificant those factors which describe humanity outside the "man-with-man" encounter.

Thus the fact that I am born and die, that I eat and drink and sleep; that I develop and maintain myself; that beyond this I assert myself in the face of others, and even propagate my species; that I enjoy and work and play and fashion and possess... that in it all I fulfill my aptitudes as an understanding and thinking, and willing and feeling being--all this as such is not my humanity. 81

In all these exercises one can be human or inhuman. All of these factors are simply the "field" on which humanity can take place and only does take place in the encounter of I and Thou or more succinctly, in the encounter of "I-am-as-Thou-art."

Human beings, in freedom, may choose not to express themselves in the normative I-Thou relationship. On the surface we might argue that the I-Thou relationship could be forsaken for an "I am" philosophy of living. Barth contends that only Jesus is truly the "man for others" and only he can live fully for the Thou; likewise the "I-it" form of encounter forsakes the Thou by ignoring, belittling, or objectifying the other and is also just another form of "I-am" philosophy.

^{81&}lt;sub>III</sub>, 2, 249.

Thus the only real options open for humanity are I-Thou or I-am. In a powerful argument, Barth refutes the "I-am" philosophy of Nietzsche because the telos of this position is the madness of isolation, the corruption of moral practices, and the using of persons by persons.

Barth warns us:

If we overlook the fact of his (humankind's) being in fellowship, and see him for himself, constructing him in terms of an abstract 'I am' in which others are not yet or no longer included, everything collapses, and in respect of the concept of the human we are betrayed into an obscurity in which it is no longer possible to make any real distinction between what may be called humanity and inhumanity. We must avoid this path. We must press straight on from the fact that the humanity of man consists in the determination of his being as a being with the other.82

In order to understand humanity, we turn from the humanity of Jesus, the man <u>for</u> others, to the humanity of "man" in general. Barth says that "the humanity of man consists in the determination of his being as a being-with-the-other." Barth elaborates, "It is not as he is for himself but with others, not in lonliness but in fellowship, that he achieves his true humanity, (and) that he corresponds to his determination to be God's covenant partner." To truly be with others is to encounter them. "Hence humanity is the determination of our being as a being in encounter with the other man" the content of which is expressed in the basic formula "I am as Thou art." 86

I-Thou (or I-am-as-Thou-art), the "basic form of humanity", most properly occurs in human society in the institution of marriage. The specialness of two persons in erotic union (i.e., covenantal

^{82&}lt;sub>III</sub>, 2, 243. 83_{Ibid}. 84_{III}, 2, 245. 85_{III}, 2, 248. 86_{Ibid}.

love-partnership), has been covered by Barth in the exegesis of Genesis 2:4b-25, the completion of the man by the gift of the woman, which has been called by Barth "the Old Testament Magna Carta of humanity." But while the man/woman encounter is the original and proper form, we must point out that the I-Thou may occur whenever any true encountering occurs. I-Thou can be one-on-one or one relating to two or more or even groups relating to each other. The I-Thou encounter may occur therefore among the staff of a church or between a pastor and the congregation. Indeed, we will want to argue for genuine I-Thou (I-am-as-Thou-art) relationships as a mark of authentic, effective pastoral administration.

The content of the encounter of "I-am-as-Thou-art" is so essential to the pastor as administrator that we will want to devote the whole next chapter to these considerations and amplify them by making comparisons to insights in the field of human management. For now, in order to have a general understanding of this side of Barth's theology of covenant, let us merely list the elements of encounter. They are:

(1) seeing eye to eye; 88 (2) mutual speech and hearing; 89 (3) mutual assistance in the act of being; 90 and (4) the quality of encountering in the previous ways in gladness. 91 The essence of encounter in I-am-as-Thou-art consists in the mutual fulfillment of each party in the

^{87111, 2, 291. &}lt;sup>88</sup>111, 2, 250. ⁸⁹111, 2, 252.

⁹⁰III, 2, 260. ⁹¹III, 2, 265.

dialogical-dialectical interplay of one with the other. Such encounter is committedly covenantal because the "I" needs the "Thou" and the "Thou" needs the "I" for fulfillment. Such encountering can occur only in an atmosphere of mutual acceptance and freedom whereby the encounter is shared by equals in a responsible kind of reciprocity.

The human encounter of I-am-as-Thou-art lends itself to a pair of discoveries and a pair of secrets. The "lesser discovery" is that we find our humanity (ourselves) in the other; the "lesser secret" is that we really are covenant-partners with each other. ("We really are in this together!") The "greater secret" is the secret of knowing that we are not only determined to be covenant-partners with each other, we are called by the sovereign, loving God to be covenantpartners with Him! And with the disclosure of that secret comes the "greater discovery," a discovery of joy in coming to know God to be a loving, saving, Diety, and humankind to be the object of his grace! None of these truths about our real humanity can be known in their full significance apart from God's revelation. "Man in his determination as the covenant-partner of man" does not disclose the fact of "man in his determination as the covenant-partner of God." One with one's fellows "does not tell him that God is with him and for him... he cannot even prepare himself to receive... (this knowledge). Only the Word and Spirit of God can tell it to him." 92 After this has happened (and we do not take this event lightly for it is nothing less than the saving and redeeming event of God that comes into the life of

^{92&}lt;sub>III</sub>. 2. 322.

a person and makes him/her "whole" and the person's humanity "real" so that one knows God to be a God, to, with, and for him/her), the person can truly accept that he/she is "called and set in covenant with God and gathered to the people of God."93

The way in which God brings his "fallen" people back to a covenantal relationship with him so that they can be "his people" is the subject of the relationship of covenant and reconciliation.

D. Covenant and Reconciliation

The understanding of humanity as covenant-partners with God addresses beautifully the specialness with which God considers each and every human being. Likewise, the integrity for persons which is afforded in the authentic I-Thou relationship in marriage or in encounter among two parties, is a most praiseworthy consideration. But all is not as it could and should be because of the distortion due to human sin. But the God of the covenant works to overcome this encumbrance to man/man and human/divine encounter by fulfilling the covenant through the act of reconciliation.

We need to remind ourselves that for Barth "the whole story of...Covenant is Jesus Christ. Without Him it could not be known. Without Him it could not be....Jesus Christ is God in the work of reconciliation and reconciliation is the fulfillment of the Covenant between God and man." In Christ is the full restoration of God's

^{93&}lt;sub>III</sub>, 2, 322. 94_{Scott}, 192.

original and gracious covenant-purpose for humanity which, owing to human sin could otherwise not be. God wills to uphold his Covenant even though it is broken for "He does not permit that that which He willed as Creator—the inner meaning and purpose of creation—should be perverted or arrested by the transgression of man." 95

We also need to remember that we have to do with a covenant of grace and "just because it is a Covenant of Grace, it can not be discovered by man, nor can it be demonstrated by man." It is therefore not the discovery or conclusion of natural theology but rather depends upon the revelation of Jesus Christ and the Word of God for its disclosure and meaning to humanity.

All that we have said about creation and covenant-partnership falls because of human sin except for the work of reconciliation accomplished in the atonement of Jesus Christ. Thus atonement.

stands at the heart of the Christian message and the Christian faith because here God maintains and fulfills His Word as it is spoken at the very first....The atonement in Jesus Christ takes place as a wrestling with and over-coming of human sin. But at the same time and primarily it is the great act of God's faithfulness to Himself and therefore to us--His faithfulness in the execution of the plan and purpose which He had from the very first as the Creator of all things and the Lord of all events, and which He wills to accomplish in all circumstances. 97

Certainly, the sin of humanity contradicts the will of the Creator, but our sin is dealt with and removed from all eternity (though it is still here temporaly to be lived with) in God's eternal Word. "And in delivering and fulfilling this first and eternal Word in spite of

^{95&}lt;sub>IV</sub>. 1. 36. 96_{IV}, 1. 45. 97_{Scott}, 194.

human sin and its consequences...sin is also met, refuted, and removed in time."98 This quote must not be misunderstood. Reconciliation makes provision for sin, but sin is very much a part of human existence. For discussion on Barth's view of sin, see Chapter 3, Part B, entitled, "Sin and Covenant." The central message of the Christian faith and the peculiar joy which it entails are bound up in Christ's reconciliation of God with his people. "God has elected and determined Himself as the fellow and friend of man, and elected and determined man as His own friend and fellow. This is the divine thought of Grace and will of Grace and decree of Grace in relation to the world before the world was." Reconciliation restored that covenantal possibility for God and humanity and thus became the fulfillment of the Covenant.

E. Covenant and the Elected Community

There remains another important consideration in Barth's covenantal theology to discuss if we are to effectively relate covenant to pastoral administration and if we are to guard against too narrow an understanding of the term. If we present covenantal being as a "me and Jesus" encounter or simply and "I-Thou", one-on-one encounter, we would fall into a false perception of covenant and of God's election of persons to covenant. The covenant must be understood in the succinct form of "I will be your God, and you will be my people." It is

⁹⁸Scott, 195. 99IV, 1, 50.

therefore a matter of God and the people of God. The order in which God elects individuals to covenantal relationship is essential for he elects first Jesus Christ (the Elector and Elected); then his Elect Community (Israel and the Church); finally he elects the individual. The ordering of election points out that "the individual cannot be understood outside the community of the church, nor the church without the personhood of Jesus Christ, nor Jesus without relation to his fellow human beings." Barth rejects the pietistic notion of moving from God's electing love in Jesus Christ to the election of persons. The Subject of election to covenantal being with God and each other "is indeed God in Jesus Christ, and its particular object is indeed men. But it is not men as private persons in the singular or plural. It is these men as a fellowship elected by God in Jesus Christ and determined from all eternity for a peculiar service, to be made capable of this service and to discharge it." 101

Barth uses the term community to name this elected fellowship "because it covers the reality both of Israel and of the Church." 102

The community of God in this two-fold form has the purpose of witnessing to Jesus Christ and thereby "to summon the whole world to faith in Him." 103 It is in the unique position to mediate between Jesus Christ and the world of non-believers so that its high calling is no less than bearing the Good News, the Gospel. Its vital importance is that "outside the Church, there is no salvation." 104

¹⁰⁰ McLean, unpublished paper, 22. 101 II. 2, 196.

^{102&}lt;sub>Ibid</sub>. 103_{Ibid}. 104_{II}, 2, 197.

This special community which is included in the election of Jesus Christ "has a twofold form which corresponds to the twofold predestination evident in the election of Jesus Christ." Jesus Christ is the crucified Messiah of Israel." As such, he witnesses to God's judgment taken upon himself as the price of being our covenant-partner. "To make us that God made Christ sin. And because He made Christ sin, we have in fact become that." But "Jesus Christ is also the risen Lord of the Church." If Israel is the sign of the old humanity, then the Church is the sign of the new. Its mission is to attest to this positive side of election, to tell the world of God's desire to be our covenant-partner; to tell of God's mercy, love, and grace attested in Christ's resurrection from the dead.

The Church thus proclaims Jesus' exaltation as the goal of His humiliation, His Kingdom as the goal of his suffering; His coming as the goal of His passing. It proclaims what in God's hands is to become and can become of man taken up and accepted by Him. 109

The Church has a glorious opportunity to participate in the election of individuals by its witness to the world. But the Church, which is the "body of Christ", tends to be directed not by its "Head" Jesus Christ, but by lesser motives and desires. "Its institutions and traditions and even its reformations are no guarantee as such that it is the true Church, for in all these things we have to do with human and therefore sinful action, and therefore in some sense with a self-expression in which it can only be the semblance of a Church." 110

^{105&}lt;sub>Mueller</sub>, 107. 106_{II}, 2, 198. 107_{IV}, 1, 75.

^{108&}lt;sub>II</sub>, 2, 198. 109_{II}, 2, 264, 265. 110_{IV}, 2, 618.

We must therefore distinguish between the true and the false Church. The visible church, its members and officials, societies, organizations, and polity is not necessarily the true Church. "What is visible in all this may be only a religious society." It is religion is but a human achievement, it is not founded on the eternal election of God in Christ—it has become the end instead of the means to an end-and must be sacrificed to the living God. This is not to say that the institutions of the church (which we in the church have a way of endearing ourselves to!) are bad as such; it is to recognize that they are only a vehicle for the expression of the true Church and not an end in and of themselves. Even the "true Church" as manifested in our human history is but a "provisional representation" wherein "the Christian love and life of even the greatest saint cannot be more than a provisional representation, limited both in time and person, of the sanctification of all men as it has taken place in Jesus Christ."

The true Church exists not for itself but for the purpose of serving Jesus Christ. It must humbly but energetically point not to itself but to the sanctification which has taken place in Jesus Christ.

The true Church "is an event," 114 which looks to the Lord Jesus in the quickening power of his Holy Spirit and lives only by and through him.

In order for the Church to serve Christ as a provisional representative of the sanctification of all humanity, it must be fitted

¹¹¹IV, 2, 619. ¹¹²IV, 2, 622. ¹¹³IV, 2, 623. ¹¹⁴Ibid.

for its work. This is done by Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit and by the Christian community itself which "in its individual members and through their reciprocal ministry, is edified, and lets itself be edified, and edifies itself." This "upbuilding of the Christian community" is marked by the integration of its members into a "solid union of brotherhood," one which is "a union of freedom, in which the individual does not cease to be a particular individual" but is united in his/her particularity. Thus the upbuilding and integration is not without its distinctive features, corners, and edges. The community builds through mutual love, acceptance and understanding. United by the Holy Spirit in self-integration, the true Church is enabled to serve Jesus Christ by serving the world.

Through this study of Barth's understanding of covenant, a portrait of the pastor as administrator is starting to form. If we take Barth seriously about covenant and church, humanity and Jesus Christ, creation and reconciliation, our study begins to act like a sieve separating out healthier, more theologically sound concepts of pastoral administration from views and practices which are less sound. Our study of humanity tells us that the pastor as administrator is not working paternally for the people but with them; and because they are with each other and need each other, they are profoundly working for each other. Decision-making, in such an atmosphere, is democratic rather than autocratic. Reconciliation teaches us to place a high

¹¹⁵IV, 2, 627. 116IV, 2, 635.

premium on forgiveness while covenant encourages us in the art of promise-making and keeping. What we have learned about God's act of reconciliation in Jesus Christ is that there can still be covenant-still something left of the relationship--even if one member of the party breaks the covenant. How much we need to add to the understanding of pastoral administration, this essential quality of forgiveness, of "making-up" between pastor and staff, pastor and congregation! Barth's notion of the church as a "provisional" form and his radical critique of the institution of religion should further serve the pastor as administrator as a reminder that the administration of the church is only a means to ministry and the church is only a means here to serve Christ and the world. Thus another mark of the pastoral administrator should be humility...Jesus Christ, not institutionalism, is Lord of the Church! The pastoral administrator is one who is "upbuilding" the community. Again, this concept shapes the manner in which we do pastoral administration. Finally, we need to always remember the link between covenant and the sovereign, loving will of God to make us his people. The members of the Church are elected for service by God and elected into covenant-partnership. Pastoral administration has a tremendous advantage over secular management if we start from this base of uplifting, joyful commonality...that we are the people of God. In the chapters ahead, we will attempt to make more clear the portrait of the pastor as administrator in the light of covenant and through the aid of comparison and contrast of pastoral administration with modern views of secular and ecclesiastical

management. First, let us turn to a closer look at pastoral administration and intimate encounter--for if pastoral administration is not personal, it is for naught--as we attempt to put forth a covenantal understanding of the pastor as administrator in for form of "I-Thou" encounter.

Chapter II

PASTORAL ADMINISTRATION AS INTIMATE ENCOUNTER

A. The Covenantal Relationship

Barth's understanding of covenant in general and humanity in particular provide solid bases from which to develop an effective style of pastoral administration. In Chapters Three and Four we will look at some specific illustrations of covenantal leadership and their consequences. Undergirding the covenantal leadership style is a particular view of human nature and human interaction. It is to this view which Barth terms "the humanity of man as the being-with-the-other." that we now turn.

We have laid the theological background to humanity as "fellow-humanity" in Chapter One. We said that the essence of covenant is its relationalness. Its form is the two-fold I-Thou (from the German "ich" and "du" intimate, familiar address) which describes the way God relates to himself within the triune God-head. It is also the way he relates to humanity through the God-man Jesus Christ. Moreover, "this covenantal form is repeated in the relationship between man and man." Barth argues that it is this relational, fellow-humanity that best describes true humanness. The two-fold I-Thou form is also the basis of the <u>imago Dei</u>. Traditional theology has usually lifted some aspect of human nature such as reason, personality, freedom, or responsibility

¹Stuart D. McLean, "The Humanity of Man in the Thought of Karl Barth," an unpublished paper (Fall 1976), 26.

its case by studying humankind as <u>individuals</u> who express this freedom, responsibility, personality, etc. But Barth argues that the <u>imago Dei</u> has a double aspect because "God lives in togetherness with Himself (the Original), then God lives in togetherness with man (first image), then men live in togetherness with one another (second image)." The <u>imago Dei</u> is this dual, relational aspect of humanity in its I-Thou form.

Thus Barth sees the I-Thou-ness of our humanity not only as a reflection of the inner Godhead, but also as a reflection of the I-Thou form of real man (God-man). Both I-Thou relationships are the <u>imago Dei</u> and because they are both images they are signs of one another. Thus, humanity (man-man) points to and reflects man's destiny which is to realize that we are covenant partners of God (man-God).3

In our attempt to understand humanity, we are frustrated if we begin by looking at humanity in general. What we observe there is the sinful person who is in basic self-contradiction. Consequently our clue to what it means to be human comes ultimately not from us but from God's revelation to us concretely in the man Jesus of Nazareth whose humanity "is to be described unequivocally as fellow-humanity." But no matter how hard we strive to be human, there are two major differences between Jesus' humanity and ours. First, he is for us from the beginning.

He alone is the Son of God, and therefore His humanity alone can be described as the being of an I which is wholly from and to the fellow-human Thou, and therefore a genuine I.5

²Stuart D. McLean, "The Humanity of Man in Karl Barth's Thought," <u>Scottish Journal of Theology</u>, XXVIII, 2 (April 1975), 132.

³Ibid. ⁴III, 2, 208. ⁵III, 2, 222.

Second, he acts on our behalf as God's deliverer which is a role only he can perform. "Man generally may mean and give a great deal to His fellows, but he cannot be their Deliverer or Savior." Only Jesus can perform that service for us.

There are differences between the humanity of Jesus and us but there are also certain similarities revealed in the fact that the man Jesus "can be for man." Barth says "where one being is for others, there is necessarily a common sphere or form of existence in which the 'for' can be possible and effective." Also, God as creator not just of the man Jesus but of all persons, implies that there is a basic creaturely seence which is common to Jesus and us. Finally, the humanity of Jesus and of humankind in general has to have a basic form common to both in order for us to be able to enter into covenant-partnerships with God through Jesus. The common form basic to our humanity stated positively "consists in the determination of his (humankind's) being as a being with the other." Therefore,

it is not as he is for himself but with others, not in loneliness but in fellowship, that he is genuinely human, that he achieves true humanity, that he corresponds to his determination to be God's covenant-partner.9

Many definitions of humanity and their implicit assumptions for styles of pastoral administration prove to be inadequate. We must not see the pastoral administrator as aloof, indifferent, "above" or less important than the parishoners. The work of a minister and his/her

⁶III, 2, 222. ⁷III, 2, 223. ⁸III, 2,243. ⁹Ibid.

pastoral administration cannot be an end in itself. Clergy who operate strictly out of selfish motives and desires are also not acting properly in this proposed understanding of humanity. Any definition of humanity which sees us as neutral to or opposing our fellow human would also be at cross-purposes to this view of ministry and pastoral administration. Any kind of pastoral administration which uses people or depricates their essential and primary aspect of being in fellow-humanity, must be judged as wrong, false, and inhuman. In short, the humanity of Jesus as "fellow-humanity" provides us with a basis for assessing the style of the pastor as administrator who works with the parish in administration.

Before we move on to discuss the elements of I-Thou encounter, we need to call attention to two aspects of the foregoing discussion of the I-Thou form. It should be remembered that (1) the I-Thou relationship is merely a definition of form, not of the content of our being. It describes what we are essentially as humans...what we could and should be. Jesus Christ was the only human who lived as an I and Thou fully to and from his fellows. He is therefore the only truly "real man", i.e., living in a fulfilled relationship with God. Through his reconciliating, redeeming activity all humans have the possibility of a fulfilled relationship with God. But that still does not allow us to be fully responsive to others. Though our sin is forgiven, we continue to "fall short of God's glory!" Thus our understanding of pastoral administration needs to differentiate between what we should be, covenant-partners with God and each other, and what we so often in

fact are, sinful creatures who are not fully trusting or trustworthy. A deeper look at the nature and extent of human sin from the Barthian perspective is found in Chapter Three, Part B, under the heading "Sin and Covenant." It should also be noted that (2) the I-Thou basic form of humanity "does not necessarily depend on theology, for much of it has been arrived at by non-theologians or non-Christians, e.g., Buber and Confucius. However, the criterion of its adequacy and its validity...depends upon theology." Barth adds:

In this context we are not speaking of the Christian in particular but of man in general, and therefore of something which has been the object of all kinds of "worldly", i.e., non-Christian wisdom. 11

Therefore, as we seek to augment and understand the definition of humanity as I-Thou being-with-the-other, we will find beneficial and useful, in exploring the science of pastoral administration, the wisdom and teachings not only of pastoral administrators but of persons from the social sciences and secular management fields.

B. Elements of Encounter

It is very exciting to me to see in readings both in pastoral administration and secular management theory and practice, the concern for interpersonal relations. This interest corresponds to the thought of Barth in his section on "The Basic Form of Humanity." In his concern for more personalized pastoral administration, Paul Irion has written:

¹⁰McLean, Scottish Journal, 135 ¹¹III, 2, 277.

¹²III, 2, 222-285.

"Parish administration is not purely mechanical manipulation of the elements of the program of the church. Much more important is the fact that it involves people." The Church and church administrators have always known that they were about people and that the interpersonal dimension of administration must take primacy over programs and policies and yet church leaders have often neglected the interpersonal dynamic. Philip Anderson's Church Meetings That Matter is devoted to a recovery of the personal dimension in church meetings. He writes:

With the best intentions in the world church leaders have often neglected to nurture skills of ministry in the most obvious places of all: the personal relationships of small groups. 14

Among the skills needed by church leaders and therefore pastoral administrators are expression, listening, response, openness and honesty. 15 When such skills are practiced in pastoral administration and people know they are important, their functioning ability in task as well as growth groups are facilitated. Indeed, "there is increasing evidence ...that providing opportunity for the sharing of personal feelings can greatly enhance the working effectiveness of a group. 16

Personalized administration is a development in secular management as well as parish administration. Claude S. George, Jr.'s The

History of Management Thought traces the development of management

¹³Paul E. Irion, "Administrative Efficiency vs. Personal Catastrophe," <u>Pastoral Psychology</u>, VIII (September 1957), 17.

¹⁴Philip A. Anderson, Church Meetings that Matter (Philadelphia: United Church Press, 1966), 60.

¹⁵Ibid. 16Robert C. Leslie, Sharing Groups in the Church (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971), 15.

theory from ancient history down to the present day. He notes the gradual trend toward an enlightened management which takes personal relations seriously. In reference to changes in the last century, George writes:

Management as we know it today has moved a great distance along the continuum of development from management as it existed in 1850. The manager of that period had little concern for managerial philosophy or human relations.17

Creating a suitable environment is very important to the modern manager. Such an environment must include a "mental facet" which positively effects an employee's attitude toward his/her work and willingness to participate in the endeavors of the company. Concern for the personal side of management is also stressed in the extensive work Principles of Management:

Getting along with people is important in organized activity, particularly where democratic traditions are strong...In directing, managers should maintain respect for the authority and personal dignity of their subordinates. Such qualities as kindness, thoughtfulness, and an eagerness to understand others may seem too obvious to mention, yet lack of these is the cause of many poor personal relationships. 18

The trend toward more personalized administration in both church and secular fields is to me a welcome phenomonon. For our purposes it would be beneficial to look at the phenomonon through Barth's understanding of covenantal being in the two-fold I-Thou form. Here we will find not only a theological basis for personal parish administration.

¹⁷ Claude S. George, Jr., <u>The History of Management Thought</u> (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1972), 171.

Harold Koontz and Cyril O'Donnell, <u>Principles of Management</u>:

An Analysis of Managerial Functions (New York: McGraw Hill 1972), 551.

but also some helpful insights into the very ingredients of interpersonal encounter.

Barth offers us four elements to "being in encounter" as an I-Thou, or more explicitly "I-am-as-Thou-art" relationship. These elements are (1) the being in which one looks another in the eye; (2) the fact that there is mutual speech and hearing; (3) mutual assistance rendered in the act of being; and (4) the fact that all this is done on both sides with gladness. Barth says that these four elements of being in encounter are "constant, decisive and necessary catagories, marks and criteria of humanity...elements which characterize this encounter constantly in all circumstances...and necessarily in the midst of all possibilities." Please note that these elements are still forms, elemental forms of being in encounter as the I-Thou covenantal relationship. To be human is to freely address the other in these ways and to be less than human is to deprecate the responsibility to self and other implied in such address.

1. Seeing Eye to Eye. "Being in encounter is (1) a being in which one man looks the other in the eye. The human significance of the eye is that we see one another eye to eye." 20 I see you as distinct from me, as someone with particularity and specialness and you see me similarly. We thereby make ourselves visible to each other for "to see the other...

¹⁹III. 2. 260.

^{20&}lt;sub>Ibid</sub>.

means directly to let oneself be seen by him...the two together constitute the full human significance of the eye and its seeing." ²¹ But if I hide from the other or ignore or refuse to see or be seen by the other, my seeing is inhuman. The experience of persons who live in segregated societies bears out the inhumanity of not seeing eye to eye and the great power in eye-contact. "Hate stares" and the opposite human tendency of avoidance of eye-contact in racially tense societies are just two kinds of looks in which real seeing and therefore human interaction is avoided.

To really see "eye to eye" is to be open one to another for further possibility in human encounter. Such openness lends "insight" into our being. Barth says that "this two-sided openness is the first element of humanity. Where it lacks, and to the extent that it lacks, humanity does not occur." In somewhat similar words, John Powell addresses the closed attitude with respect to hearing as well as seeing:

The opposite of this openness is a kind of "defensiveness" which hears only what it wants to hear, according to its own preconceived structure and bias, which sees only what it wants to see. The defensive person cannot be a growing person because his world is no bigger than himself and the circle of his horizons is closed.²³

To see and be seen is the basis of insight and perception not only of others by of myself. I see how I am perceived by the look of the other and the other sees how he/she is perceived by my look.

²¹III, 2, 250. ²²III, 2, 252.

²³ John Powell, Why Am I Afraid to Tell You Who I Am? (Niles, IL: Argus Communications, 1969), 34.

As a pastoral administrator I need to see the specialness of the other; I need the perception and insight that comes from the "mutual look" of our seeing eye to eye. I need an openness to see and to be seen so that humanity can begin to occur and effective administration can take place.

2. Speech and Hearing, "Being in encounter consists (2) in the fact that there is mutual speech and hearing."24 Seeing the other and having openness of encounter is a first but limited step, limited to visual reception where the other "is no more than what he seems to be in his eyes and according to his standards."25 What is lacking at this point is the mutual intercourse of speaking and hearing. "The I has thus to express itself to the Thou."26 A dialectic occurs which consists in mutual speech and hearing, reciprocal expression and reception. Expression is more than mere verbage for it is a means by which I assist the other in understanding me. Hearing is more than "common endurance" because the active listener actually modifies the speaker as he or she receives what Barth calls "the expression of the Thou." Thus, I am modified by the other just as the other is modified by me. His/her and my humanity are found there in the midst of our serious attempt to speak and be heard. It is essential to the understanding of humanity as beingwith-the-other that persons get their humanity within the dialectic. for I need the other to complete myself, but "so long as I have not

²⁴III, 2, 252.

²⁵III. 2. 253.

²⁶III, 2, 254.

grasped that it is not just a matter of the other but of myself, so long as I can think that I can avoid hearing the other without harm to myself. I do not give a human hearing."27

Pastoral administrators who can <u>really</u> listen and speak are both fulfilling and fulfilled as ministers. Unless I listen and am heard, speak and am spoken to, Thou and I are unfulfilled. But there seems to be too little good speaking and listening today. Elizabeth O'Connor point to half of the problem:

Very few of us have had a listening, seeing person in our lives. We do not hear what others--not even our children--are saying because we, ourselves, have had no one to hear us. We do not have the feeling that what we think and what we say important.²⁸

But what others say and think is vitally important to the pastoral administrator in setting goals, making plans, gathering ideas, and making decisions. Real listening is an invaluable ministry as Paul Tournier points out:

How beautiful, how grand and liberating this experience is, when people learn to help each other. It is impossible to overemphasize the immense need humans have to be really listened to, to be taken seriously, to be understood.²⁹

Koontz and O'Donnell offer a concrete example of effective listening in pastoral administration in the Catholic Church called "compulsory staff service" whereby the superior is forced to listen to his subordinates. "While the line decision rests with the superior he cannot refuse to listen." Effective pastoral decision-making

²⁷III, 2, 259. ²⁸Elizabeth O'Connor, <u>Eighth Day of Creation</u> (Waco, TX: Word, 1971), 19.

²⁹Powell, quoting Paul Tournier, 5. ³⁰Koontz and O'Donnell, 309.

as well as mutual personal fulfillment of pastor and parishoner rests partly on good listening.

The other side to good listening is, of course, the speaking-responding element in I-Thou conversation. Authentic communication is risky and difficult but it pays the dividends of honest, openness and trust in human relationships. Powell writes about authentic communication:

If you and I can honestly tell each other who we are, that is, what we think, judge, feel, value, love, honor, and esteem, hate, fear, desire, hope for, believe in and are committed to, then and then only can each of us grow. Then and then alone can each of us be what he really is, say what he really thinks, tell what he really feels, express what he really loves. This is the real meaning of authenticity as a person, that my exterior truly reflects my interior. It means I can be honest in the communication of my person to others. And this I cannot do unless you help me. Unless you help me, I cannot grow, or be happy, or really come alive. If

The list of benefits of authentic communication between pastoral administrator and parish is perhaps endless. McGregor declares that authentic communication is the first step to working through differences. 32 It is also a means to overcoming the sense of isolation among persons who set policy or make "executive" decisions. Authentic communication resists the tendency for administrators to act blindly or to treat others as objects. Interestingly, Koontz and O'Donnell suggest that good communication can protect against the tendency of administrators to be paternalistic also, because effective

³¹ Powell, 43, 44.

³²Douglas McGregor, <u>The Professional Manager</u> (New York: McGraw Hill, 1967), 191.

communication resists the kind of isolated decision-making on the part of superiors for the supposed benefit of their subordinates.³³

Mutual speaking and hearing means to the pastoral administrator that decisions are made in the special context of I-Thou, pastor-staff, pastor-parishoner. The ivory tower is dismantled when authentic communications are established; plans and decisions have a context from which they are heard and discussed instead of germinating from an unhealthy vacuum. The administrative act has at its core a mutualness. Administration issues from the milieu of pastor and parishoner, each speaking and listening, fulfilling and being fulfilled in their attempt at the common task of serving the church.

3. <u>Mutual Assistance in the Act of Being</u>. "Being in encounter consists (3) in the fact that we render mutual assistance in the act of being." There is the openness of seeing one another; there is the attempt to know each other and ourselves in mutual speech and hearing; but there is a higher step in the act of encounter, viz., that of being <u>for</u> the other. "If I and Thou really see each other and speak with one another and listen to one another, inevitably we mutually summon each other to action," 35 which Barth also terms a rendering of "mutual assistance" in the act of being. Human beings act <u>for</u> the other in a limited sense; only Jesus Christ is totally for others. Ours is to act with the other.

^{33&}lt;sub>Koontz</sub>, 565.

³⁴III. 2, 260.

³⁵III. 2. 260. 261.

to see a sense of reciprocity in encounter, and to mutually assist. To be human is to serve the other and be served. "My action is human when the outstretched hand of the other does not grope in the void but finds in mine the support which is asked." 36 We give support and encouragement; we share burdens, joys and frustrations; we lend a helping hand. To do and be less would render me an empty "I" and leave the other an unfulfilled "Thou." Covenantal being is founded on such acts and in turn is given real tenacity, enduring quality, and an ability to withstand cleavage within relationships because of this basis in encounter.

Seeing, listening and speaking are important ways to gather data for effective parish administration. Plans, goals, objectives, and decisions are all essential parts for the administrative process. But eventually the data and decisions must materialize in concrete action. The Christian community needs to be a place that encourages the mutual ministry of one serving another in the name of Jesus Christ. "To be a person in community one must both give and receive, confirm and be confirmed. The Christian Church comes into being as we come to know our gifts and help others to know theirs." 37 Channeling those gifts is one task of church administrators.

The acts of assistance are mutual. I do not serve just myself.

I do not turn my back on the Thou and refuse to help or be helped.

^{36&}lt;sub>III</sub>, 2, 264. 37₀'Connor, 20.

My humanity depends on the fact that I am always aware, and my action is determined by this awareness, that I need the assistance of others as a fish needs water. It depends upon my not being content with what I can do for myself; but calling for the Thou to give me the benefit of his action as well. 38

The similarity here between the need of the other to speak and listen and the need for help of others in a full expression of ministry is striking. The parish administrator cannot go it alone but needs the parishoners to unite with him/her that together, they can serve fully the parish. If the common tendency of a pastoral administrator is to "go it alone," the tendency of the laity is often to stand aloof from actively serving the church. But as Bonhoeffer states:

A community which allows unemployed members to exist within it will perish because of them. It will be well, therefore, if every member receives a definite task to perform for the community, that he may know in hours of doubt that he, too, is not useless and unusable.39

I-Thou encounter of "rendering of mutual assistance in the act of being" sees the necessity of giving and receiving assistance for our very humanity depends upon it. Such administration does not stand alone, but strives to illicit the help of others in the common cause of Christian ministry.

4. The "Gladly" of Encounter. The final ingredient of being in encounter "consists (4) in the fact that all the occurence which we have so far

³⁸III, 2, 263.

³⁹⁰ Connor, quoting from D. Bonhoeffer's Life Together, 26.

described as the basic form of humanity stands under the sign that it is done on both sides with gladness."40 We see and are seen gladly. We render mutual speech and hearing gladly. We gladly offer and receive assistance. Each of these three ingredients to the I-Thou encounter is external. Only as we enter into encounter gladly do we internalize them and make them ours.

Barth maintains that "the alternative to 'gladly' is not 'reluctantly' but 'neutrally' -- which means that I am free to choose between 'gladly' and 'reluctantly.'"

This important freedom of choice points to the truth that though I have no option to reciprocal seeing, hearing and speaking, and assistance, I do have one option--to willingly participate or withhold myself from the Thou. But the choice to encounter reluctantly would bring self-alienation and humanity without root, dynamic, and substance. It would ignore the fact that "the I ordered in relation to the Thou and the Thou to the I, and that this order must be realized."

There can be no compromise to the "gladly" unless the mutual I-Thou relationship is merely "accidental" to humanness; but in point of fact, "if we do not speak primarily of what he (the person) is gladly, we do not speak of his essence, of himself."

Thus the gladly is not accidental but real and purposeful.

The term "gladly" points to an inward sense of joy and completeness in real man (i.e., "real" man in Barth's usage is a person who is

⁴⁰III, 2, 265.

⁴¹III, 2, 666.

⁴²Ibid.

^{43&}lt;sub>III</sub>, 2, 267.

redeemed and therefore living in the verticle I-Thou covenant partner-ship with God), which is possible because of God's determination to make us his covenant partner. We cannot really describe the subjective nature of that inwardness except as we see its "describable exterior." This hidden element is really the "great secret" of "real man"; it is the joy of knowing that God, in his freedom to act, has intentionally chosen us to be the receivers of his agapeistic love. When "real man" perceives and accepts God's intention, his response is the joyful "gladly" of a covenantal partnership with God. The content of his Christian life is that of loving and enjoying God (rather than fearing God and serving God out of a loveless sense of duty.

In this context, Barth speaks not only of a "greater secret", but also of a "lesser secret," viz., that human beings are covenantal partners with each other, too. Whether we affirm the great secret of "real man" or not, humanity encounters another "gladly" in the discovery of each other's uniqueness, affirmation, and awareness of mutual need for each other. To share the gift of the other is the "gladly" of human I-Thou encounter.

The essential points for the "gladly of encounter as it relates to human fulfillment and effective pastoral administration have been made. But it may be of personal interest to the reader to see where Barth's argument takes him: The "lesser secret," that we are covenantal partners with each other (Barth's "man-man") corresponds to the "God-man" encounter except that in the former, agapeistic love is not a part of the relationship. "New Testament agape is not a deter-

mination of human nature as such. It is the action and attitude of the man who only becomes real and can be understood only in the course of his history with God."44 And yet, in the "man-with-man" encounter. there is a form of gladly and it does contain a form of love--a form which Barth calls eros. He defines this eros in the Greek sense of "universal love seeking satisfaction" 45 which "in its purest form... is an impulse from below upwards."46 The element of self-satisfaction which eros seeks out, leads to a negative understanding of human freedom and human nature as relationally understood, but the term does have positive merit: "Eros contains an element which in its visible form and even in its essence is not evil or reprehensible, but of decisive...importance for the concept of humanity, and therefore indirectly for that of Christian love."47 It contains qualities of vitality and consolation and "it was in the atmosphere of Greek Eros that...human freedom in the co-existence of man and man attained a noteworthy and unforgettable form for every age and place."48 It was the Greeks and their notion of eros that first understood that the being of man "is free, radically open, willing, spontaneous, joyful, cheerful, and gregarious."49

Here, then, is a connection between the Christian and non-Christian, the real man and humanity--both know a "gladly" and can see in the love-paradigm of the other, viz., Christian agape and

^{44&}lt;sub>III</sub>, 2, 275. 45_{III}, 2, 279. 46_{Ibid}.

^{47&}lt;sub>III</sub>, 2, 282. ⁴⁸_{III}, 2, 283. ⁴⁹_{Ibid}

human eros respectively, a middle ground on which to negotiate and find understanding. Here, too, is the ground on which the Christian can address the non-Christian world. Real man knows both eros and agape and can understand the good of eros and the better of agape. Knowing, too, the essential interrelatedness of all persons as a covenant relationship, the real man would be equipped with an egalatarian, rather than paternalistic attitude upon entering into the dialogue between Christian and non-Christian.

There is correspondence between the "gladly" of Christian joy and the "gladly" of humanity; there is similarity between agape and eros; there is a "lesser secret" that we are covenant-partners with each other; there is a "lesser discovery" that we find our humanity (ourselves) in the other; there is also a "greater secret" that we are determined as God's covenant-partner; finally there is a "greater discovery" in that convenant relationship, a discovery of the joy of knowing God as loving savior. In these ways there is similarity; but "man in his determination as the covenant-partner of man" does not disclose the truth of "man in his determination as the covenant-partner of God." Man with his fellows "does not tell him that God is with him and for him...he cannot even prepare himself to receive...(this knowledge). Only the Word and Spirit of God can tell it to him."50 After that has happened (and we do not take this event lightly for it is nothing less than the saving and redeeming event of God that comes into the life of a person making him/her "whole" and the person's

⁵⁰III, 2, 322.

humanity "real" so that he/she knows God to be a God to, with and for him/her), the person can truly accept that he/she is "called and set in covenant with God and gathered to the people of God." 51

The encounter element of "gladly" seems to me to be most crucial to effective pastoral administration. It would be the worst kind of ministry, a sham in the face of all that it means to be human, let alone to be Christian, if ministry were administered reluctantly. And yet, from such data as that presented in the studies of Blizzard. Jud. Leiffer and others mentioned in the introduction of this paper. pastoral administration is not seen by most pastors as a function done "gladly." One can only guess about the disparity over pastoral administration. Perhaps in the terms we are now using, the "I"--the pastoral administrator -- feels trapped, manipulated, over-burdened, inadequate to many administrative tasks. At the same time, perhaps the "Thou" -- a parishoner or church officer, feels used or manipulated or determined by the inhumanity of the administrative process. If either or both are the case, then pastoral administrative tasks would inhibit the opportunities for "glad" encounter, willing participation of I and Thou, and spontaneous mutual acceptance of each party involved in the administrative process.

I believe that church administration has too often been dehumanized. I am in basic agreement with Alvin Lindgren when he suggests:

⁵¹111, 2, 322.

Church Administration needs not only to be redefined but reconceived. It is so laden with "organization," "promotional," and "busy work" encrustations that the core concept of dynamic church administration is not visible at all to most ministers. 52

For me, part of the "dynamic" to which Lindgren refers is the interpersonal interaction of those whose humanity is addressed in the gladness of encounter in I-Thou relationship.

pastor and parishoner in the administrative process must be maintained. The <u>will</u> to have honest, open communication; the <u>desire</u> to be relevant and contemporary; the push to risk and be vulnerable; the courage to offer daring innovation; the desire to really strive to be a serving church—all of these and more imply a "gladly" among those who gather and allocate the resources of the church and attempt to achieve its dreams and goals. As I see it, effective pastoral administration and solid church programming correlate with church leadership which sees, speaks and listens, and acts "gladly" (and therefore freely and willingly) in I-Thou encounter. The humanizing effect of this atmosphere filters through church leaders and into church programs and policies.

C. Toward a Covenantal Style of Pastoral Administration

The purpose of this section is to correlate part of what has been already said about pastoral administration within the context of encounter and to suggest a "style" of pastoral leadership which is

⁵²Alvin J. Lindgren, "Church Administration as a Dynamic Process", <u>Pastoral Psychology</u>, XX (September 1969), 8.

covenantal. Our findings should offer a helpful foundation for the specific concerns and issues raised in Chapters Three and Four. As a preliminary consideration it should be noted that I am speaking out of and to the "democratic" church tradition rather than the "authoritarian" church tradition. Accordingly, some of these conclusions may better suit my own tradition.

A style of pastoral administration which takes its lead from covenantal being starts with the two-fold I-Thou understanding of humankind. People are seen relationally rather than in isolation. We need each other, not superificially but essentially to keep the administrative task vital and human. While we should not overlook the particular skills, abilities, callings, duties, and roles of individuals, the essential point is our togetherness in all our differences and uniqueness, working for the common task of upbuilding the Church. We need each other to complete ourselves and as we do the work of the church. Harry Coiner's definition of pastoral administration seems to fit here:

Administration in the Christian parish is a means of devising ministries in the church, a means both of alerting people to what God is working in them and directing them toward what this means in their life together.53

An emphasis on our basic covenantal being seems to give added impetus, purpose and credibility to this definition.

Parish administration is both a theological and a pastoral issue. "It is pastoral because administration has to do with persons.

⁵³Harry G. Coiner, "The Pastor as Administrator of the Christian Fellowship", Concordia Theology Monthly, XXXV (May 1964), 271.

It is theological because, for a Christian, administration has to do with persons in the light of Christ."54 The particular "light" that our covenantal understanding of humanity has cast is that we are determined as covenant-partners with God and with our fellows. Thus our theological position begins here rather than, say, with the sinful state of humans. We are looking at how humans are essentially rather than actually. The ramifications for pastoral administration are tremendous. Beginning with covenantal rather than sinful being establishes an essential ordering to our human understanding. We begin not with a neutral (e.g., tabula rasa) or negative (e.g., sinful humanity) view of humanity, but rather with a positive view, that of humankind's covenantal nature. This positive understanding permits a degree of open, risk-taking vulnerability in ministry and pastoral administration that might not be acceptable if our view of humanity were less positive or neutral. We note that the world is full of untrustworthy people and people who do not know the "secret" that our humanity is locked with our fellows. But knowing "the sin of the world" does not mean we resign from covenantal commitment. It does mean that our seeing, speaking and hearing, and activity help us to be "wisely" vulnerable. The covenantal understanding impels us to take the first step toward others but it is a step which is qualified by what we have learned in our attempt at encounter with the group or individual. Again, we might ask, is every human situation to be an I-Thou

⁵⁴ James G. Emerson, Jr., "What Church Administration Can Learn from the Secular World", <u>Pastoral Psychology</u>, XX, (September 1969), 52, 53.

experience? No, modern living and maybe even human makeup as well as the closeness of some people could not permit such widespread application of I-Thou encounter. But the openness, the readiness, the permission-giving for I-Thou encounter, particularly in ministry and pastoral administration, should be something for which we constantly strive. Not every situation is an I-Thou situation; every situation is to some manner of degree a potential I-Thou situation.

Secular management theory confirms that our view as administrators of human nature is significant to management style. McGregor tells us:

The manager whose conception of cause and effect in human behavior is mechanical must rely on the "orneriness" of human nature for an explanation of the many forms of indifference or resistance to managerial influence. 55

Edgar Schein reminds us that "every manager makes assumptions about people. Whether he is aware of these assumptions or not, they operate as a theory in terms of which he decides how to deal with his superiors, peers, and subordinates." 56 Schein lifts to our attention four basic managerial assumptions about people. These are: "rational-economic man," "social man," "self-actualized man," and "complex man." 57 He argues that the best view of humans is the "complex" view, a mixture of each of the above assumptions. The managerial strategy for "complex man" includes flexibility wherein the manager is "prepared to accept

⁵⁵McGregor, 15. 56Edgar H. Schein, <u>Organizational Psychology</u> (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1965), 47.

^{57&}lt;sub>Ibid</sub>., 47, ff.

a variety of interpersonal relationships, patterns of authority, and psychological contracts." ⁵⁸ Covenantal pastoral administration with its grounding in the I-Thou experience needs to avoid strictly mechanistic, coercive or utilitarian views of human nature and offer managerial strategies which contain the general openness of Schein's "complex-man" view of humanity.

Other descriptions of covenantal pastoral administration come to mind from our studies: covenantal administration is people rather than program-oriented; it recognizes the essential qualities of freedom and integrity in the "gladly" of encounter; it strives for openness in the elements of seeing, speaking and hearing, and mutual activity; it can be <u>for</u> others in Christian service but more significantly it strives to be <u>with</u> them as both pastor and parish work alongside each other in mutual, common tasks of ministry.

We would do well now to compare our findings with traditional understandings of pastoral leadership style.

Clyde H. Reid cites a study by White and Lippitt in the late 1940's which isolated three basic styles of leadership: authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire. 59 With respect to policies and decisions, the authoritarian church leader did the determining; the democratic church leader made policies a matter of group discussion and decision; the laissez-faire church leader offered minimal guidance

⁵⁸¹bid, 50.

⁵⁹Clyde H. Reid, "Leadership Styles in Church Administration", <u>Pastoral Psychology</u>, XX (September 1969), 18.

in group decisions.

Reid draws upon a study of the effects of leadership style on staff associates by Kenneth R. Mitchell who concluded: "A democratic group structure provides the context which best encourages those criteria which he associates with Christian fellowship." His criteria for Christian fellowship and the marks of a democratic group sound like the "fruits" of covenantal pastoral administration. They include: open group communication, authority resting largely within the group, and group orientation toward performance of tasks rather than toward group leaders. Reid notes a further advantage of the democratic over the authoritarian style when he comments: "While authoritarian style binds followers to dependence upon the leader, the democratic style helps to free them to responsible maturity in the faith."

Since covenantal pastoral administration works to unite the people into common tasks in Christian service and takes their common ministry seriously, we must concur with Reid in the value of democratic leadership for a covenantal style of administration.

I am convinced that themost viable model of leadership for the minister is a basically democratic style in which he shares the decision-making power with his people as much as possible within the limitations of the situation. This style encourages growth and maturity in the laity by entrusting them with their rightful share in the decisions that shape the life of the church.⁶²

In summation, pastoral administration which is covenantal is at its basis, relational administration. Barth's use of the two-fold

^{60&}lt;sub>1</sub>bid. 19. 61₁bid. 22. 62₁bid.

I-Thou form gives us a tool for understanding the qualities of human encounter and clues to the nature of humanity and effective methods of doing pastoral administration which have both a theological and administrative validity. The covenantal view of administration offers a positive approach to human nature and is intrinsically democratic. It remains to be seen in succeeding chapters how covenantal administration effects both collegial administration and the life of the congregation.

Chapter III

COVENANTAL MINISTERIAL LEADERSHIP

In Chapter One we examined Barth's theological understanding of covenant. We noted that covenant is intrinsic to God's free and sovereign being and that God wills to be in covenant with his creation. The outward basis of covenant is seen in God's sovereign act of creation and when we observe humanity as God intended it to be, we are looking at beings determined by God for covenantal relationship with each other and with their loving God. The covenantal relationship with God withstands the threat of human sin through the act of reconciliation in Jesus Christ. Through reconciliation Christ fulfills God's covenantal intentions and bids us to share our lives in him through the "elected community," the church.

In Chapter Two we begin relating the meaning of covenantal relationship to the discipline of pastoral administration. It was fitting to consider administration and covenant at the point of relational being and intimate encounter because most essentially we who are "determined as covenant-partners" with each other as well as with God are indeed relational beings.

We examined covenantal being as an I-Thou, two-fold form marked by seeing, speech and hearing, mutual assistance, and the "gladly" of encounter. Then we examined the "covenantal style of a pastoral administrator" noting that such a style should strive to be democratic, open, relational, flexible, and, of course, people-oriented. But in all our study to this point we have tended to see covenantal being in its form

rather than its content; we have seen what could and should be "human" encounter and humanized pastoral administration in the light of our "determination as covenant-partners" with God and each others. This procedure has helped us to see the essence of humanity which is our covenantal being; but we have yet to closely examine actual human existence which is immersed in sin and which works against covenantal being and therefore against the will of God.

It is important that we realize the distinction Barth makes between what we are intended to be and what we are, what our real essence is and what has become our actual existence. Therefore, in this chapter, we will first look at what Barth understands as sin in the light of covenant. Then we will proceed to analyze the notion of sin and its effects upon the administrative process. We will also consider some secular attempt to deal with administration in the light of "sin" (I put sin in quotes in this instance since most secular management theory does not use the word as such). Finally, we will examine a number of specific pastoral administration issues and attempt to understand them from the perspectives of sin and covenantal being.

A. Sin and Covenant

The common procedure in systematic theology is to develop the doctrine of sin prior to the doctrine of reconciliation. But for Barth, "the doctrine of sin belongs to the context of the doctrine of reconciliation." In the doctrine of reconciliation, God shows himself

¹III, 2, 34.

to be faithful, merciful, kind, self-giving, and in all ways gracious in the face of humankind's faithlessness, defiance, ingratitde and selfishness. Sin is a most terrible thing because "it takes place within the covenant and is directed against the gracious God." One could therefore say that our mistreatment of God is analogous to mistreating a loving parent rather than, say, a complete stranger or enemy. Our dilemma as sinners is complicated by the fact that sin distorts our self-understanding and our covenantal realtionship with God. We do not realize the depth and danger of sin. We may recognize and even acknowledge imperfection, limitations, and incompleteness. but not sin as such. "Access to the knowledge that he is a sinner is lacking to man because he is a sinner... All serious theology has tried to win its knowledge of sin from the Word of God and to base it on that Word."3 All of our attempts to discover the truth about ourselves outside of God's revelation have missed the mark. The key to our selfdiscovery is Jesus Christ. "Only when we know Jesus Christ do we really know that man is the man of sin, and what sin is, and what it means for man."4 Once more, therefore, Barth begins his theological position from Christology. Jesus Christ is our standard for good and evil. In him we see the pureness of humanity which reveals by contrast the sinfulness of the rest of us. Actually, sin is most fully seen in our response to Jesus Christ in the powerful sense that we sought to destroy by the cross him who came to save us!

²III, 2, 34. ³IV, 1, 361, 362. ⁴IV, 1, 389.

Another consideration about sin is that it does not argue for a separate and autonomous place in Barth's <u>Church Dogmatics</u>. Barth argues his case this way: "What is the ontological place of sin in the Bible? Surely not in a realm of its own where it has it own being and can exist in and for itself?" Sin was not created by God. It is not a part of creation or a part of the world as God intended it. Sin "has its right, but it is the stolen right of wrong. It has its power, but it is the stealthy power of impotence. It exists and is only in opposition to the will of God and therefore in opposition to the being and destiny of His creature." Thus, sin belongs under the heading of the doctrine of reconciliation in Barth's <u>Dogmatics</u> and is to be understood as contrary to the covenant.

Barth depends upon a structure in Platonic, classical idealism to explain the nature of sin except that he turns Plato's structure on its head. Barth says that the real is in fact the ideal and the unreal is in fact what we call the real. To be in sin is to be engaging in the realm of unreality because it is not part of the creation as God willed it. To be real, really real, is to participate in God's covenantal being as his partner and secondarily to be in covenantal relationship with fellow humanity.

If we have not discussed sin fully in this paper until now, it is not because sin is insignificant, but rather because sin has to be seen after an examination of covenantal being. "Sin cannot be

⁵IV, 1, 389. ⁶IV, 1, 139.

recognized and understood and defined and judged as sin in accordance with any general idea of man or any law which is different from the grace of God and its commandment, the law of the covenant." Sin is not proper to our being, but even so, we must not underestimate its horror. "This dark prelude or counterpart to the divine covenant and work of grace—has to be taken very seriously." The fact that it does not receive separate treatment preserves in Barth's theology the free sovereign nature and covenantal will of God but does not preclude the sweeping and serious attention paid to sin in the Scriptures and within human life and its institutions. Indeed, we would not be able to conclude a discussion of covenantal pastoral administration without seriously looking into the significance of sin as a factor in human relations and the administrative process.

Since sin is not a positive part of the cosmos, its manifestations are best described negatively. The three primary forms of sin are pride, sloth, and falsehood. Pride is a sin in that it is "the negation, the opposite of what God does for us in Jesus Christ in condescending to us, in humbling Himself, in becoming a servant to take to Himself and away from us our guilt and sickness." When human beings want to be as God and exalt themselves, they do a double injustice of denying both their humanity and the humility of God's deity. The second form, sloth, is a sin in that it is "the negation, the opposite of what God did in Jesus Christ, the servant who became

⁷IV, 1, 140. 8IV, 1, 138. 9IV, 1, 142.

Lord to exalt man--not to deity but to His own right hand in a fellow-ship of life with Himself." So to be slothful is to ignore or disclaim the exaltation of our humanity. Outward expressions of human sloth include laziness, apathy and inferiority feelings. The third form of sin is falsehood, which is "the negation, the opposite of the fact that God in Jesus Christ has made Himself the Guarantor of the reality of that which has been done by Him as servant and Lord in that movement from above downwards and below upwards, of the fact that in Jesus Christ God has made Himself the witness of the truth of atonement." Therefore, to disclaim all that we are through Jesus Christ is to be in the sin of falsehood--it is to live as if we have not been redeemed, loved and cared for by a loving, covenant-making and keeping God in Jesus Christ.

Sin is a reality, but it is not autonomous. It is the negation of the divine "Yes" of God, but as such it exists only as a response to the divine "Yes". It can be known, "and all the horror of it can be known--only in the light of that Yes." God has the first and last word. The "No" of sin falls in between. Covenantal fulfillment in Christ's act of reconciliation points to and maintains God's sovereign will to be covenantal in his graceful love. But we live, in some sense, in the in between and for us sin is a present problem. It effects us individually and institutionally and must be combatted in all aspects of life, especially and including our dealings with the church. The pastor would do well to keep this in mind as he/she

functions as an administrator. We will be considering some of the effects of sin upon the administrator as we look into "covenantal leadership as colleagial administration."

B. Covenantal Leadership as Colleagial Administration

Before we proceed with a look at covenantal leadership style as reflected in team ministry, democratic leadership, and mutual trust, mutual support, forgiveness and tenacity it would be well to explain to the reader my reasons for looking into staff ministries before our chapter on the covenantal congregation. My reasons are these: First, there is value in isolating the staff situation as an illustration of pastoral administration because the parallels to staff ministries closely resembles the nature of administration in secular management. Where there are crucial differences in administering to voluntary groups such as church members versus management of professionals on a management team, these differences are negligible on the level of the professional staff of a large congregation. The voluminous writings of the secular management field are therefore more readily applicable in the context of the multiple staff situation where volunteerism is not a direct factor for consideration. Second, by isolating the staff situation, we can more concisely examine the leadership styles and qualities in covenantal administration. Confining our interest to a small church staff should make our observations and findings clearer and more sure. Third, studies have shown that strengths and weaknesses in administrative leadership on multiple staff ministries also have parallels in the pastor-parish relationship.

One such study by Kenneth R. Mitchell is discussed in Clyde Reid's article "Leadership Styles in Church Administration." Mitchell examined the effects of certain leadership styles on staff associates. Among his discoveries "Mitchell found that there is a tendency in the direction of a parallel in the congregation's relationships and those within the church staff." In other words, the same strengths and weaknesses in parish administration that hinder or enhance the management process within a staff also hinder or enhance the management process between the pastor and the parish. Therefore, the insights we offer to multiple staff ministries are insightful to the single-pastor church and to pastor-parish administration as well.

1. Team Ministry. The term "team ministry" is ambiguous. Virtually every pastor I know working on a multiple staff believes in "team" ministry--and it matters not if he/she is a senior, associate, or assistant pastor. In my reading I have discovered many understandings of what team ministry really is. Effective team ministry does not depend on total sharing of the work of the church; it does not require persons to think alike or even necessarily to have extensive agreement on theological, social or political issues. The essence of team ministry is the way in which colleagues relate together as a staff. To my way of thinking, there is a close parallel between effective team ministry and effective marriage partners. It is not essential that a couple think, talk, work, and play the same way. In fact, the

¹³Clyde H. Reid, "Leadership Styles in Church Administration," Pastoral Psychology, XX (September 1969), 20.

best marriages and the most effective team-ministries develop out of the rich interplay of differences between partners. Like the Protestant understanding of marriage as a covenant, I believe one of the marks of an effective team ministry is its covenantal nature.

If team ministry is to be covenantal it will be inherently relational and person-oriented. The realtionship established has its grounding in the theological truth that God seems to be our covenantal partner and has given us the gift of fellow humans as covenantal partners. The two-fold form of our humanity as team ministers is still that of the "I-Thou". Even with these initial claims upon the team ministry, there is still room for the traditional differentiation between a senior minister and subordinate(s). Many pastoral administrators agree with Paul Cullins, who believes that a team ministry "is helped rather than hindered, when the structure provides a Senior Minister." In fact, L. Wilson Kilgore, writing in the "religious forum" of Pastoral Psychology, has suggested that:

the healthiest basis for the maintenance of ...(administrative) continuity is for one of the staff members to be the administrative head of the church, the pastoral overseer, the minister of the staff, as well as the minister of the congregation.

Equality of ministry as a theological and ecclesiastical position is certainly valid. Within the local congregation where there is more than one minister and differing responsibilities and skills, the presence of a senior pastor is natural and does not hinder the covenantal

Psychology, XIV (March 1963), 33.

¹⁵Jean Huffman and others, "The Ministry as a Team", Reader's Forum, <u>Pastoral Psychology</u>, XIV (September 1963), 55.

understanding of team ministry necessarily. But the staff which really seeks to keep the team ministry pattern needs the pattern "to be constantly re-stated so that the Senior Minister in church authority does not slip over into meaning superior in responsibility as a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ." 16

Among the ingredients that Cullins found that were necessary for the establishment and maintainence of effective team ministry in his church were these: First, the team needed personal rapport—the feeling of mutual trust and openness to each other; second, a clarified line of authority within the congregation. Here Cullins makes clear the necessity for a "head" administrator, not one who is "superior," but one who simply functions consistantly as the executive of the church. The third ingredient was "equal authority as ministers of the gospel." This element in the team ministry works to correct any false authoritarianism or coersion which could develop out of one pastor being a "head" administrator. These three ingredients, taken together, were the basis of a successful team ministry at First Congregational Church. Newtown. Connecticut. 17

Roy Colby and James Spicer have compiled a list of benefits that came from their team ministry experience. Their list included (1) an environment conducive to professional development; (2) freedom to pursue individual interests and talents; (3) the development of specialized competencies of the individual ministers; (4) the possibility of two different personalities exercising their pastoral

¹⁶Cullins, 34. ¹⁷Ibid, 33-34.

abilities in diverse ways so that lay persons could seek out the pastor of their choosing; (5) a full ministry to the total church. This list indicates that these team pastors were not only fulfilled professionally, but were apparently doing an excellent job in the parish as well. 18

Successful team management has been discovered in secular as well as ecclesiastical circles with similar benefits where it has worked. It has been suggested that an effective managerial team needs eight essential elements: understanding, mutual agreement, and identification with respect to the primary task; open channels of communication; mutual trust; mutual support; effective management of human differences; selective rather than blanket use of the team; appropriate, integrated, and complementary skills among team members; and effective team leadership. 19 When these elements are present and a group has time to interact and develop its identity, creative and exciting work can come forth.

We know that effective team ministry and secular management yields great dividends in personal and professional fulfillment and that the team concept is solid and fruitful in terms of the creative work it produces. We also know, albeit to a limited degree, some of the essential ingredients that go into producing a successful team. But the peculiar thing is that the truly successful administrative

¹⁸Roy D. Colby and James E. Speicer, "The Co-Ministry as a Team: an Experiment," <u>Pastoral Psychology</u>, XIV (March 1963), 40, 41.

¹⁹Douglas McGregor, <u>The Professional Manager</u> (New York: McGraw Hill, 1967), 162-169.

team is all too rare. The short length of stay of many associates and assistant pastors in the average parish, the reports of dissention and disatisfaction among staff relationships, and the stress associated with multiple ministries attest to the problems in church staffs and the ineffectiveness of church administrators. I believe a deeper look into the meaning of covenantal ministry on the one hand and human sin on the other can offer fruitful insight into the problems of church administration. Note that our intention in this and subsequent sections of the paper is not to give definitive but rather descriptive answers to these problem areas.

Consider the sin of pride and how it could upset the covenant within a church staff. Just as pride on the part of humanity works against the "God-man" covenant, so pride among fellow humans works against covenantal fellow humanity. Pride, in its defiance, works against the truth that God humbled, in its defiance, works against the truth that God humbled himself in the form of Jesus Christ. Within human relationships pride puts a barrier between people by saying in effect that the other is not important or not needed or inferior to me or less worthy than I am. Colby and Spicer think that "factors of personality which militate against a successful 'team operation'" are the most central problems facing colleagial administration. They may be right in their opinion that "the primary lure (for the ministry) is a need for authority." Thus, the arrangement of a senior-assistant staff fits at least the needs of the "head"

²⁰Colby and Spicer, 37. ²¹Ibid.

pastor. Spicer and Colby observe further that "most often younger men do not feel powerful and independent, so they seek some relationship which will compliment their need. But their motivational push is toward a sense of power and independence; therefore the incessant squabbles between 'father and son' are set in motion."²² Consider the strain that is put upon the staff relationship when a great deal of self pride figures into it. Resentment, distrust, hostility, anger and dissention can emerge from any or all staff members. The I-Thou gives way to "I-it" relationships and, of course, the efficiency and enjoyment of teamwork plummets to drugery.

Just as pride can upset the staff relationship, so too can sloth. Sloth is the form of denial by humanity of the exaltation of the man Jesus Christ and therefore of our humanity. This negation repeats itself in human relationships whenever people willingly fall from the exalted call which they have through Christ. Unlike pride which is a will to be more than what we are (God instead of human), sloth is the sin of settling for being less than what God created us to be and wills us to be (fully human instead of less than or only partially human). Sloth seems to ignore the truth that we have been loved, cared-for, and considered worthy through the grace of God; it also ignores the great truth that we have been counted as God's covenantal children and given the great and comforting and fulfilling gift of fellow humans with whom we may choose to be in covenant relationship. Sloth within human relationships upsets covenantal being

^{22&}lt;sub>Ibid</sub>.

because the slothful person is not giving his/her share to the relationship for any of a variety of reasons that can be traced back to the
form of sin we are calling sloth. Leadership which is too laissez
faire, wishy-washy or indifferent might fall into this category.

Apathy, laziness and cowardice could be other expressions of sloth.

The I-Thou relationship, the covenantal element of encounter, the
valuable interplay of persons on the staff--all these suffer under
sloth just as they do under pride. In the prideful example there is
too much self-assertion; in the slothful illustration there in not
enough.

Barth's third category of sin comes in the form of falsehood. In the "God-man" covenant the falsehood is our seeming denial of the promises and hope for humanity given us by God. When we know God's word and hear his commandments but do not act upon them accordingly, we live in falsehood. "It is a matter of hearing and obeying the truth which is told us, a matter of active joy in it."23 When there are uncompromising differences between clergy on a church staff and a breakdown in teamwork occurs, something false is at work. There is a denial of our covenantal being with each other and even a denial of the deeper covenant between God and his people. The very joy in which we may celebrate our covenantal fellow humanity, that "gladly" of encounter, is denied in the sin of falsehood and in turn the staff relationship becomes all too somber and looses vitablity.

A team ministry which is truly covenantal, will work to overcome

²³IV, 1, 143.

the threats of pride, sloth, and falsehood. The essence of the covenantal team is the preservation of a sense of our mutual need for each other to fulfill the tasks of ministry; the mutual need issues in an I-Thou relationship which has all the encounter dynamics present which were described in Chapter Two.

Sin is a powerful detriment to effective team ministry. But the desire for intimacy, mutuality, trust, support, openness, honesty, and love are also influences to team ministry and to covenantal pastoral administration. Barth says we are "determined" as covenant-partners with each other so that there is a longing within for completeness which comes when we live in a wholesome relationship with God and with our fellows. We will have occasion to look more specifically into this point in connection with the ensuing discussion of "democratic leadership," "mutual trust and support," and "forgiveness and tenacity."

2. Democratic Leadership. In the previous chapter under the section entitled "Toward a Covenantal Style of Pastoral Administration", we put forth the opinion that democratic leadership style in the church (particularly in the "mainline" Protestant churches of America) is preferrable to either authoritarian or laissez-faire leadership. Our preference for democratic leadership has its basis in the nature of church as a voluntary organization with high moral and theological purposes, and in the nature of ministry with its calling, task, meaning and purpose inspired by the Old and New Testaments. I believe that

such an understanding of church and ministry is basically covenantal and hence, argues for a democratic, participative style of leadership. There are findings in recent secular management theory which have shown that certain kinds of organizations and their constituency incline toward democratic leadership styles. These studies will illumine our understanding of the benefit of democratic leadership for the church.

Seeking to correlate organizational power and authority with employee response, Edgar Schein draws upon Amitai Etzioni's study of the classification of organizations by the type of authority they use and the kind of involvement required of their membership. His typology of organizations showed three basic types of groups: coercive, utilitarian, and normative.²⁴

Coercive groups and their leadership which operates with the use of force, such as prisons, detention centers and so forth, tended to "alienate" members; utilitarian groups which use rational-legal authority and the use of economic rewards (most business and industry falls here, for example) tend to have a "calculative" employee response. Those groups with normative authority which operate with intrinsic rewards, status, and often have voluntary membership (such groups include religious organizations, service and voluntary associations and the like) tend to get a "moral" response from their employees and/or members. By moral we mean that "the person intrinsically values the mission of the organization and his job within it,

Prentice-Hall, 1965), 45.

Organizational Psychology (Englewood Cliffs: 25Ibid. 45,46.

and performs it primarily because he values it."26

From the nature of the way members relate within normative groups and to their leaders, we can see a level of covenantal understanding, though unnamed as such by Schein, at work within the organization's personnel. Naturally these typologies are "pure" illustrations of organizations and thus seldom conform exactly to organizations in reality. One wonders, though, what happens to the purpose and meaning of group participation in normative organizations (such as the church) when elements of coercive or utilitarian leadership style are interjected into these groups. I believe that non-democratic leadership styles often work to undermine the covert covenants among group members in the normative organization.

Not only do certain organizations lend themselves best to particular kinds of leadership style, the kinds of tasks involved and the understanding that subordinates have of their work and their professionalism largely determine the most effective kind of executive leadership. In their book <u>Managerial Process and Organizational</u>

Behavior (1969, A. C. Filley and R. J. House conclude that:

participative leadership is most effective when (1) the task involves nonroutine decisions, nonstandard information and decisions need not be made quickly; and (2) when subordinates feel a strong need for independence, feel that they should be involved in decision making and can contribute to it, and are confident of their ability to work without close direction.²⁷

The typical multiple staff ministry has a high degree of non-routine

²⁶ Thid. 46.

²⁷Harold Koontz and Cyril O'Donnell, <u>Principles of Management</u> (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972) 560, 561.

decision-making. Its clergy are professionals with much training and skill who see themselves as called by God and the church. They would therefore fit the categories described by Filley and House and would probably work best under the conditions of a participative style of leadership.

Kenneth R. Mitchell defines democratic as:

those structures and functions which promote open communication within the group, which provide for the group's setting its own goals, and which permit the group to be oriented toward performance of tasks.²⁸

Mitchell concurs with our position that democratic leadership is best suited for the church when he states that he "found the democratic style most compatible with Christian theology and practice for the multiple staff ministry." 29

From the perspective of covenantal colleagial administration, there are many similarities between team ministry and democratic leadership. The dynamics that make a solid team contribute to sound democratic leadership and decision-making. Likewise, elements of leadership and personal characteristics which erode team ministry can also negatively effect the democratic process. Such qualities as openness, mutuality, equal regard for the other's thoughts and feelings, trust, and support are among those that create both good team ministry and democratic leadership. When these qualities are missing or eroded, they make a negative effect upon the staff and their covenantal relationship.

^{28&}lt;sub>Reid, 19</sub>. 29_{Ibid., 22}.

Democratic leadership in multiple staffs, as in other management situations, requires honest and effective communication both within the team and the parish. "The executive functions serve to maintain a system of cooperative effort,"30 and "the first executive function is of developing and maintaining a system of communication." 31 Systems of cooperation and communication are, covenantally speaking, the responsibility of subordinates as well as the head pastor. Moreover, authentic communication "means that each member (including the leader) is genuinely free to express his real feelings, as well as his intellectual ideas, openly in the group." 32 But while both leader and subordinates share the responsibility for open and honest communication, in order to facilitate democratic leadership and decision-making, the initiative for authentic communication must come from the superior. The issue for subordinates is, initially at least, primarily one of security. "Security for subordinates is possible only when they know they have the genuine approval of their superior."33 The subordinate who wants to feel secure in his/her work "requires first of all, the strong and willing backing of his superiors for those actions that are in accord with what is expected of him. 34 If communication is not open. honest, and trustworthy the staff relationship will erode and with it the effectiveness of democratic leadership.

³⁰Chester I. Barnard, <u>The Functions of the Executive</u> (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1938), 216.

³¹ Ibid., 226. 32_{McGregor}, 191.

³³Douglas McGregor, <u>Leadership and Motivation</u> (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1966), 54.

³⁴¹bid. 58.

We cannot help but remember again Barth's profound look at covenantal human encounter in seeing, speaking and hearing, mutual assistance in the act of being, and the "gladly" of encounter. How valuable these elements are to covenantal staff leadership which strives to be democratic.

We have said that those factors which work for or against team ministry also work for or against democratic leadership. Thus, there are also many correlations between the forms of sin which mediate against team ministry as well as democratic leadership style. Sin in the form of pride which erodes team ministry by negating or downputting or dismissing the "Thou" or over-estimating the "I" can have similar effects within democratic leadership development. The sin of pride erodes the democratic process because it negates the worth and value of the Thou, the other partner(s) of the team. We cannot relate effectively if a staff member takes a superior attitude over others. The vitality of communication, the essence of teamwork, the quality of encounter breaks down when, in the name of democratic equality, one thinks of him or herself as "more equal" than the others! Sin in the form of sloth which erodes team ministry by negating, down-putting or dismissing the "I" or under-estimating the "Thou" can also have negative effects within democratic leadership development. Sloth erodes the democratic process because it negates the worth or value of the subject "I". When a team member operates out of inferiority or indifference, he or she is not contributing a fair share to the democratic effort. In the void created, the value of democratic decisionmaking is lost. In the sinful form of sloth, I fail to realize how

much I am needed in the whole democratic process. Thus Reid warns us that the democratic leader needs a particular kind of strength, one that works against sloth; it is "the strength to accept the hostility of those dependent persons who want him to make all their decisions for them." 35

As I see it, democratic leadership is in a state of dynamic equilibrium or state of balance between the direction of authoritarianism which issues from the sin of pride and laissez-faireism which issues from sloth. The democratic leader exists in this tension as he/she works to keep the administrative process democratic.

The other threat to democratic leadership could be attributed to Barth's third form of sin, falsehood. The sin of falsehood works against democratic leadership just as it does in team ministry because in both cases this sin is a denial within the "man-man" covenant of the truth that we really do need one another to fulfill our Christian ministry. The sin of falsehood leaves us in isolation and without the "gladly" of our fellows. In isolation we lose the essential value of mutual sharing of likenesses and differences which is essential to making effective decisions and distributing pastoral skills through good team ministry. Such isolation is dishonest because it flies in the face of the truth of our humanity—the fact that we are covenant—partners with each other and covenant—partners with God.

Much more could be said about democratic leadership style, of its qualities and merits and of the threat posed by human sin in the

^{35&}lt;sub>Reid, 22</sub>.

forms of pride, sloth, and falsehood. More insight will come to these areas when we explore other issues in this chapter.

The other side of the tendency for inhibiting the democratic process through pride, sloth, and falsehood is the positive pull toward covenantal relationship. We need to remember, and in this we take hope, that human beings are not only tempted by sin; they have been endowed by the Creator to will also to be covenantal. While one voice within me wants to hide or judge or negate, or to isolate myself from others and therefore to undermine the democratic process, another deeper pull is longing for a covenantal relationship. If Barth is right about the latter quality of humanity, then there comes into play the possibility for discovering that I need the other and belong to the other and am fulfilled in my humanity in the Thou..."that there is a discovery, the mutual recognition that each is essential to the other."36 How basic and essential the qualities of covenantal being are to democratic leadership! Those who covenant "meet gladly and in freedom, not as tyrants and slaves, but as companions, associates, comrades, fellows and helpmates."37 Within the covenantal understanding of staff ministry there can only be a leadership style which is profoundly democratic.

3. <u>Mutual Trust and Support</u>. Mutual trust and support are two of the essential bases upon which team ministry and democratic, covenantal leadership depend.

^{36&}lt;sub>III</sub>, 2, 271. 37_{Ibid}.

Trust and support are two very basic psychological needs of all persons. Abraham Maslow tells us that human needs are organized in a heirarchy starting with the physical needs for survival and progressing through stages such as the needs for security, social relationships, and ego-satisfaction. In fact,

the average...adult in our society generally prefers a safe, orderly, predictable, lawful, organized world which he can count on and in which unexpected, unmanagable, chaotic, and other dangerous things do not happen. 38

Thus, the desire for trust and support go deep into our need level and relate to the need for security. It is therefore not surprising to learn that:

trust is...basic to the relationships that exist in a small group meeting. When trust is absent, strategies—even positive strategies intended to be helpful—are seen as manipulation. When trust is absent, members become suspicious, hostile, isolated, and on guard. No one commits himself, his ideas, or his feelings in an atmosphere of mistrust.³⁹

McGregor echos these same sentiments when he argues for authentic communications in management teams which depend on certain conditions.

"Among the most important of these is a climate of 'mutual trust and support' within the (management) group."

"40 In fact, "unless mutual trust is a characteristic of the system, the openness of communications (as well as the effectiveness of other aspects of team operation) will be severely limited."

"41 Mutual support is usually associated with mutual trust. It can lead to "caring, concern, help, friendliness

³⁸ Abraham Maslow, <u>Motivation and Personality</u> (New York: Harper & Row, 1954), 41.

³⁹Rhilip A. Anderson, <u>Church Meetings that Matter</u> (Philadelphia: United Church Press, 1966), 41.

⁴⁰ McGregor, <u>Professional</u>, 39. 41 Ibid., 163.

(and) love, 42 on the managerial team or multiple church staff.

Existentially mutual trust means:

"I know that you will not-deliberately or accidentally, consciously or unconsciously-take unfair advantage of me." It means: "I can put my situation at the moment, my status and self-esteem in this group, our relationship, my job, my career, even my life, in your hands with complete confidence."43

Trust is an art which can be developed on the team. It takes a long time to build, is influenced more by actions than words, and can be damaged very quickly. When trust is present people work together efficiently, effectively and creatively. Their individual efforts are also enhanced. But where trust is lacking, human relationships suffer, team work deteriorates and even individual effort diminishes.

Mutual support can range from hostility to indifference to a positive attitude of love and concern. Support can be sentimental or paternal and foster dependency on the part of team members or it can offer the team vital encouragement and strength. At its best, mutual support "enables each member to be more himself, to feel less necessity for fighting to obtain his 'rights' or for defensive or protective actions. He is freed to contribute more fully his 'assets' to the primary task of the unit."

Mutual trust and support are really covenantal concepts because of their quality of mutuality. Trust and support must come from <u>both</u> sides, from superior and subordinate. Church persons know all too well illustrations of lack of trust and support from both sides of a staff

⁴²Ibid. 43Ibid. 44Ibid., 164.

relationship. The element of mutuality also fights against unhealthy attitudes such as paternalism and dependency or superiority and inferiority within the staff. Mutual trust and support are covenantal also because they go to the heart of interpersonal encounter. Where they lack there is isolation, anxiety, guilt, false perception and expectation; where they are present there truly is the "gladly" of encounter and the joy of human fulfillment through the I-Thou relationship.

Anderson expresses his thoughts in a related way: "The fellowship and reconciliation we seek in the church depends upon a basic climate of trust. In fact, trust is basic to all human relationships." Today in the business field and in the church, the need for building trust and support is being noticed which is a central reason why "more and more companies are involving their men (and women) in training programs on group discussion and group process." 46

McGregor sees the managerial team who have mutual trust and support much the same way I see a covenantal colleagial church administration, at least with respect to the effect and value these have on the team.

When there is mutual trust and support, many issues are recognized to be unimportant which under other conditions would be the subject of great concern. Defensive and protective behavior diminishes. Only the truly important differences—those which involve deep feelings or significant conflicts of ideas—require working through. 47

Mutual trust and support also lead to fewer meetings, better communication, and more willingness to either share or delegate decisions and

⁴⁵Anderson, 33.

⁴⁶ James G. Emerson, Jr., "What Church Administration Can Learn from the Secular World," <u>Pastoral Psychology</u>, XX (September 1969), 54.

⁴⁷McGregor, Professional, 194.

work within the team or staff. Moreover, the atmosphere of mutual trust and support "is the ideal environment for individual learning and growth." 48

As in the case of "team ministry" and "democratic leadership", we can paint a glowing picture of "mutual trust and support" and list the virtues and advantages of such qualities in church administration but that does not insure us that administration will follow through in the prescribed manner! Human relationships are very delicate and fragile. Our needs for safety and security play a big role in how we respond to leadership. Openness and authentic communication has its price and many do not want to pay it. Fairness, mutuality, vulnerability, equality—all contain certain risks which some would prefer to avoid.

In avoiding as well as manipulating or dominating the mutual quality of I-Thou encounter by the senior, associate or assistant pastor, the covenantal relationship can become strained or broken. Mutual trust and support need genuineness and honesty on all levels of communication within the staff. But pride, sloth, and falsehood, Barth's forms of sin, so easily work against the I-Thou staff relationship. Lack of trust and withdrawal of support can have its basis either in the arrogance of pride or indifference of sloth. And where the sin of falsehood does not admit to the essential need of human beings for each other or the truth of covenantal partnership with God and fellow humanity, the staff environment is ripe for dissention and

⁴⁸Ibid. 195.

fragmentalization.

The covenantal staff relationship must be a sharing, team ministry which is intrinsically democratic because covenantal being contains the elements of openness to each other, reciprocity of speech and hearing and mutual assistance. But there is one thing more...the "gladly" of it all. We could fake our openness, our conversation, our works--but we cannot be positively involved with each other if we are not together gladly. Barth says,

If we are to embrace human nature as such, as created and given by God, then we must grasp as its motivating element the decisive point that man is essentially determined to be with his fellow man gladly, in the indicated freedom of the heart. 49

We admit that the sinful side of human nature with its "strange distinction of a freedom for its own denial and destruction" 50 works against covenantal being and hence mutual trust and support and therefore democratic leadership and the team. But the other possibility for the staff, the potential of which is present in any human encountering, is that people will come together and do so gladly. As they meet gladly and in freedom they come together as companions, associates, comrades, fellows, and helpmates and lay open the tremendous opportunity for a "discovery"—"the mutual recognition that each is essential to the other. There is thus enacted the paradox that the one is unique and irreplaceable for the other." 51 But he/she also discovers his/her own uniqueness and irreplaceability too. Thus there is a sense that the other is a gift to you and you are a gift to the other. There is joy in this "gladly" and genuineness and therefore a sense of

⁴⁹III, 2, 273. ⁵⁰Ibid. ⁵¹III, 2, 271.

equality, mutuality, and natural trust and support. Moreover, among members of a Christian church staff, the discovery of our covenantal relationship has the effect of pointing to and confirming the deep covenant between ourselves and God.

I believe the covenantal staff is not only possible, it is vitally necessary to today's multiple staff of the church.

4. Forgiveness and Tenacity. Covenantal team ministry contains democratic leadership and depends upon an atmosphere of mutual trust and support to give strength and confidence to the church staff. Further, we have maintained that covenantal ministerial leadership is aligned with democratic, team ministry and we have suggested that mutual trust and support are essential to the dynamics of covenantal collegial administration. Two other qualities needed in covenantal collegial administration are forgiveness and tenacity.

Forgiveness is just one term, though perhaps it runs to the heart of the matter, to describe a cluster of related elements in a management team or collegial church administration that makes provision for those inevitable times when powerful mistakes, transgressions, and disagreements might otherwise rip apart the team. Where there is provision for forgiveness there is a possibility to resolve conflicts and differences within the team. Forgiveness is related to tenacity which is the ability of covenantal being to remain even after one party has broken covenant. Strangely enough, I first saw the inter-relatedness of forgiveness and tenacity not in Barth but in the thought of the brilliant social scientist Hannah Arendt who writes on

forgiveness and promises:

The possible redemption from the predicament of irreversibility-of being unable to undo what one has done though one did not, and could not, have known what he was doing--is the faculty of forgiving. The remedy for unpredictability, for the chaotic uncertainty of the future, is contained in the faculty to make and keep promises. 52

The two faculties, says Arendt, belong together. Forgiveness frees us from the burden of the past and our misdeeds; promises lead to security, durability, and cohesion for the future. She says, moreover, without forgiveness, our opportunities to act in freedom would be greatly hindered. Without being bound to promises, even our identities would not stay. People live then in the dialectic of promise/forgiveness.

How much this sounds like the Barthian concept of covenantmaking (promise) with its grounding in the absolute need we have for
the other, and, say, the model of Hosea who continues in covenantkeeping (forgiveness) even after his wife has forsaken her side of the
covenant. Barth writes:

Yahweh is faithful to Israel, His betrothal and marriage continue. His love also remains. And because everything remains on His side, this means that there is also indestructible continuity in the being of Israel...it is still the people which Yahweh has marked out and sought and loved, and with which he has entered into covenant. 53

Here we see the remarkable quality of the "God-man" covenant, namely, the ability to forgive and keep the covenant because one side has remained faithful, loving, and caring even in a stormy time.

⁵²Hannah Arendt, <u>The Human Condition</u> (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 212, 213.

⁵³III. 2. 297.

The church staff which can allow for promise breaking through forgiveness is a team which will tolerate mistakes and failures. To state it positively, such a staff will also allow for risk, new ideas, and creativity.

For the Christian minister, permission to risk failure has powerful biblical roots as we see from the words of Jaroslav Pelikan:

The Cross of Christ means that we can afford to fail, can afford to be mistaken, can afford to live by a code more interesting than the rule book....He enables us to discover the spontaneity and the joy without which any ambition does not become a tyranny. If I can afford to be mistaken I can afford to take some chances. I do not have to know how things are going to turn out before I undertake a project, for I shall not be justified or saved by its outcome. The same chances are going to turn out before I undertake a project, for I shall not be justified or saved by its outcome.

What Pelikan says is true, but we have seen that creative, risk-taking innovation does not occur on the church staff where there is insecurity, distrust, and lack of support.

In an atmosphere of forgiveness, tolerance, acceptance, and approval, the staff seems to enjoy each other and their tasks, and thus, direct their work freely and voluntarily toward set goals and objectives. But the opposite is just as true as McGregor points out from the experience of all to many secular management situations:

In the absence of a genuine attitude of approval, subordinates feel threatened, fearful, insecure. Even neutral and innocuous actions of the superior are regarded with suspicion. Effective discipline is impossible, high standards of performance cannot be maintained, "sabotage" of the superior's efforts is almost inevitable. Resistance, antagonism, and ultimately open rebellion are the consequences.55

⁵⁴Thomas E. Brown, "Vocational Crises and Occupational Satisfaction Among Minister", <u>Princeton Seminary Bulletin</u>, LXIII, 2, 3 (December 1970), 54.

⁵⁵McGregor, Leadership, 55.

The truth of the matter is that harsh feelings like those described by the subordinate all too often occur on church staffs among head pastors too. And there are sound biblical, theological, and humanistic reasons to believe that such conditions do not have to be. The covenant between pastors on the church staff could become greater and more meaningful than their individual needs. Even in the face of pride, sloth, and falsehood we can affirm our deep oneness in the Cross of Christ and the covenantal God of the Old and New Testaments. The affirmation in the "God-man" covenant can carry over into the covenants that bind us. It is thus possible to move beyond seeing ourselves as merely locked into a "contract" where promise-breaking, mistake-making and basic disagreement mean necessarily the break-up of a church staff. We have the biblical witness for the possibility of a truly covenantal church staff who believe that their covenantal relationship can transcend the legalism of contract and make provision for genuine acceptance and forgivaness, approval and healthy disagreement, care and loving criticism. There is real tenacity in such an understanding of covenantal colleagial administration.

C. Concluding Remarks

Time and space bring limitations to a chapter which could be much, much longer. We have not tried to cover every aspect of covenantal colleagial administration, but instead have chosen to examine a limited number of important elements to the effective church staff. We have tried to describe some of the essential ingredients of an effective team ministry and show both the destructive element of sin

and creative element of covenantal being. The findings of this chapter were partially built upon foundations laid in the initial chapter on Barth's covenantal theology and from the previous chapter on pastoral administration as intimate encounter. Douglas McGregor has compiled two very useful lists of the characteristics of effective vs. ineffective management groups. I have taken the liberty to place the lists in column form for comparative purposes. The lists immediately bring to mind much of the discussion we have had about covenantal pastoral administration.

CHARACTERISTICS OF MANAGEMENT TEAMS

Effective Team Characteristics

- 1. Atmosphere is relaxed, comfortable, informal with interested members.
- 2. Much discussion/participation
- 3. All understand tasks and objectives.
- 4. Members listen to each other and all ideas get a hearing.
- 5. There is disagreement but no "tyranny of the minority." Even unresolved conflicts do not block team effort.
- 6. Decisions are reached by concensus with general agreement of the group.
- 7. Criticism is frequent, frank, and relatively comfortable.
- 8. People freely express feelings and ideas on problems and group operation.
- 9. Assignments are clear and accepted by members.

Ineffective Team Characteristics

- 1. Atmosphere reflects indifference, tension, boredom.
- 2. Discussion dominated by a few
- 3. Objectives, tasks are unclear
- 4. People do not really listen to each other and fear criticism.
- 5. Disagreements are often suppressed or unresolved. Open hostility can erupt at times.
- 6. Actions are often taken prematurely by majority vote.
- 7. Criticism may be present but often tension-producing and embarrassing.
- 8. Personal feelings are hidden rather than open.
- 9. Action decisions tend to be unclear.

Continued:

- 10. The chairperson does not dominate nor does the group act in defiance.
- 11. The group is self-conscious about its own operations.
- 10. Leadership remains with the person chairing the committee.
- 11. The group tends to avoid any discussion of its own maintenance.56

McGregor's "effective team" may or may not be called "covenantal", but certainly the ingredients for covenantal administration are present in the effective group. The attention to openness, mutual speech and hearing, mutual assitance, the "gladly" -- all these seem implicit in the effective team characteristics. Present, too, are elements of mutual trust, systems of support, democratic leadership and a solid team spirit. The effective church staff can have all these qualities going for it and more--for the church and its people are God's "elected community" who proclaim the Good News of a covenant-making and keeping God. The church is a covenant community at the outset and its leader-ship, at its best, is reflective of that covenant.

The following chapter will attempt to examine the consequences of covenantal leadership and style in the life of the congregation.

Much of that which we learned to appreciate as covenantal colleagial administration works not only among a few persons on a church staff, but also applies on a broader scale—between pastor and congregation.

⁵⁶ Taken from Douglas McGregor, The Human Side of Enterprise (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960), 232-238. Note: My wording usually is used in describing characteristics of teams.

Chapter IV

PASTORAL LEADERSHIP AND THE COVENANTAL CONGREGATION

In Chapter Three we discussed the development of the sense of covenant within a church staff. In the small group setting covenant develops out of intimacy. Within the staff, members can be available to each other to develop oneness, honesty and concern. The small group can grow in covenantal trust and accountability. It can refine its methods of communication and practice the art of mutual affirmation. When the staff does work at these tasks, it develops a covenantal identity which effects all its functioning in a qualitative way.

The need for covenant is as real within the congregation as it is on a church staff. At this level, however, we are not looking at covenant within the setting of a small, intimate group. On the pastor-parish level, our concern is not that each member has a profoundly intimate I-Thou relationship with the pastor. Even in a small single-pastor church of one hundred members or less, the physical, social and psychic cost would be simply overbearing. Our concern, then, is for a covenantal leadership style on the part of the pastor which in turn works to promote a covenantal, caring, trusting "atmosphers" within the parish and within the administrative process.

A covenantal leadership style attempts to put across the view that the whole parish and indeed the greater church exists in covenantal relationship. Through the arts of preaching, pastoring, teaching, and administrating the pastor has opportunities to develop and model covenantal being in the congregation.

In this final chapter, we will be looking at covenantal pastoral leadership on the congregational level. A logical place to begin is in a review of Barth's understanding of the church and its place in God's covenantal will for humanity. Next we will look closely at pastoral covenantal leadership in exemplary modeling for the congregation. Then we will consider some practical ways of promoting covenantal awareness in the congregation and through pastoral initiative. Finally, we will consider the consequences of convenantal pastoral administration to the whole congregation.

A. The Church in Covenant

Before proceeding to examine pastoral leadership in the covenantal congregation, we need to remind ourselves of the meaning of the church from Barth's perspective. From the outset the church is a covenantal body, elected by God to serve his gracious purposes.

In Chapter One, we said that the church is the special community to which God elects individuals to service. The church exists to witness to Jesus Christ and "to summon the whole world to faith in Him." The church bears the Good News that Jesus Christ is Lord and, therefore, lives not for itself but for him and his glory. The church points to that which is eternal but is itself only a "provisional representation, limited both in time and person, of the sanctification of all men as it has taken place in Jesus Christ." In order to be fitted for its

¹II, 2, 196.

²IV, 2, 622.

calling, the church is impowered through Jesus Christ by the Holy
Spirit and through the same Holy Spirit has a sense of community and
purpose. In an atmosphere of free, loving togetherness, which Barth
calls a "union of brotherhood," the community is edified or "upbuilt"
into service. The church is not molded into community by an autocratic
God. Rather, the people corporately and individually are loved, upheld,
cared for, encountered, and, in short, covenanted with by God in Christ
through the Holy Spirit.

But we also need to remember that the church often fails to be true to Jesus Christ. "The true church is God's gift to the world and therefore is nothing if she fails to function in a way that is relevant to the world's need for community." In point of fact, the church, as a human institution, does fail all the time.

The community is betrayed into alienation when instead of or side by side with the voice of the Good Shepherd to whom it belongs it hears the voice of a stranger to whom it does not belong but to whom it comes to belong as it hears its voice.⁵

The church fails because the community is broken by sinful humanity in its pride, sloth and falsehood. Barth admonishes, "The men outside (the church) are no different from those inside—within the community. The saints are not, as it were, artless children unfortunately led astray by wicked rascals. They themselves are wicked rascals." The church fails when it loses sight of its calling to serve and seeks

^{3&}lt;sub>IV. 2. 635</sub>.

Allen O. Miller, <u>Invitation to Theology</u> (Philadelphia: Christian Education Press 1958), 115.

⁵IV, 2, 667.

⁶IV, 2, 666.

instead to be served. In going astray it moves away from its covenant responsibility and thus its sense of identity.

Barth's critique of the self-serving church is justifiably strong:

By trying to be important and powerful within it instead of serving, by trying to be great instead of small, by trying to make pretentious claims for itself instead of soberly advocating the claim of God, it withdraws from the world...and the result is the development in the world--for why should not Christians too enjoy some measure of worldly success?--of ecclesiastical authorities which in some degree, greater or smaller or even very small, are self-exalting and self-established.?

When this development occurs, and certainly the leadership must stand largely to blame for this predicament, the church loses sight of its mission, its covenantal being, and thus its purpose for being. When it ceases to serve, the church in effect:

separates itself for its own pleasure from poor, sinful, erring humanity bleeding from a thousand wounds, trying to impose itself where it owes its witness, and denying and suppressing its witness by witnessing only to itself.⁸

The church reflects the brokenness of all human community. It is sick and it is in jeopardy, but "although it is destructable, it cannot be destroyed" because it is upheld ultimately by God through the working of the Holy Spirit.

There is a tremendous amount of effort needed by the church membership and its leaders if expressions of the true church are to emerge from the self-serving elements of the Christian community. It is my belief that one place to exert positive leadership is in a

^{7&}lt;sub>IV</sub>, 2, 669. 8_{IV}, 2, 670. 9_{IV}, 2, 672.

covenantal style of pastoral leadership in a form I call "exemplary modeling." By living a covenant life style, the pastor reflects the I-Thou form in which God calls us to be his covenant-partners in and through the elected community. Intimate encounter and covenantal relationships among the church staff and reflected in preaching, teaching, pastoring, counselling, and administering will be a very positive step in making the local congregation an expression of the true church.

B. Covenantal Leadership in Exemplary Modeling

In Chapter Three we referred to a study by Kenneth R. Mitchell of the effects of leadership styles on the staff associates who work with authoritarian, laissez-faire and democratic senior pastors. Among the findings of Mitchell's study was that the same patterns of relationship that develop from the pastor's relationship with the staff also develop in the pastor's relationship to the congregation. I believe the reason why this is so is because there is correspondence between the two relationships so that if there are frustrations within the staff relationship, similar frustrations will likely appear in the workings between a pastor and the congregation; if there are positive relationships with honest communication, trust, support, and real caring on the church staff, there will likely be similar elements of positive relationship between pastor(s) and parish.

¹⁰Clyde H. Reid, "Leadership Styles in Church Administration," Pastoral Psychology, XX (September 1969), 21.

Leadership which seeks to be human and covenantal must reflect intimacy and covenant in every aspect of the church's life.

The science of church administration must now include a careful consideration of leadership styles. The style of church leadership in particular must be ethically and theologically consistant with the content of the gospel being proclaimed verbally from the pulpit, else a contradiction may cancel out the verbal message. 11

In a multiple-staff church, one definite beginning place for modeling ministry is through a covenantal relationship among persons of the staff. Is there a covenantal sense of relationship within the staff? Is there the openness of seeing eye to eye (both literally and in terms of insight and perception)? Do members of the church staff discuss issues fairly, giving a good listening to all members? Can there be criticism without tension and embarrassment? Do staff members act like they care about each other and accept each other's feelings as well as ideas? Is there a sense of "gladly" among the staff? Does the church staff have a high level of mutual trust and support? Is there provision for forgiveness and an allowance made for mistakes? These and other questions arise out of issues raised in previous chapters. If the answers to these questions are positive and affirming, then the staff is modeling a covenantal colleagial administration which will enhance a positive, caring spirit among the whole church.

Even if there is no multiple staff at the church, the questions which we have raised are valid because committees and governing boards reflect many of the same dynamics. Covenantal pastoral administration starts with the fact that we are together in ministry and need each

¹¹Ibid., 18.

other essentially in our life of faith. Anderson calls such leadership "servant-leadership." The first act of the servant-leader is that
he "demonstrates his commitment to a shared ministry." Shared means
all members of the church minister to each other and to the world.

That each member has a stake in ministry; that each is called in his
or her life of Christian duty is implicit in the New Testament understanding of churchmanship. It should be a part of each church member's
covenantal understanding of church membership. But shared ministry is
most difficult to actualize unless the pastor(s) is willing to give up
some control and make space for all to share in the church's ministry.
Exemplary modeling of shared ministry, being willing to share the Lord's
work, may be the most effective way to make shared ministry a part of
the covenantal congregation.

One basic question still may need to be answered--why are we so concerned to be and act in a covenantal way? Why a covenantal congregation, as it were? From a Barthian perspective, the answer is that the I-Thou covenantal relationship between persons points to and reflects not just the way God made us, but also the way he relates to us in our faith. The "real man", the person of faith in God in Jesus Christ, is in a covenantal I-Thou relationship within the "God-man" covenant. For the pastor or congregation to relate in ways other than those which lead to covenantal being is to move away from the central truth "that real man is determined by God for life with God" and this determination

Philip A. Anderson, <u>Church Meetings That Matter</u> (Philadelphia: United Church Press, 1966), 63.

"has its inviolable correspondence in the fact that his creaturely being is a being in encounter-between I and Thou." 13 "Real man" lives with God. God's covenant-partner and all of his/her relationships should be "covenantally" effected by this central, covenantal faith-relationship.

We know, however, that this is not always the case. In fact, the destructive power of sin is such that human beings and their institutions, including the church, are often not covenantal or even hinder covenantal being. But the positive side is that when covenantal leadership is experienced with all the positive relational dynamics emerging (such as mutual trust, support, forgiveness, caring and so forth) pastoral leadership will benefit from the mutuality of covenant relationship. People will have a stake in the pastor's leadership and will help the pastor to lead in ways that upbuild the whole community and lead it in paths of service rather than self-service. There will be honest resistance against the paternalism of false authoritarianism. People will work better together with the pastor instead of going their own direction. The tendency of the church and its leadership to sink into sloth or pridefully ignore Jesus Christ as the true head of the church will be resisted because all members will share in the effort to be a covenant-keeping and faith-sharing people.

C. Limits of Covenantal Relationship

Exemplary modeling is a vital part of covenantal leadership but being an example is not a sufficient step for the development of

¹³III, 2, 203.

a covenantal congregation. Being a living example may teach and inspire but even more must be done if there is to be a covenantal congregation. In a full congregation the numbers of people make it impossible for each member to be in full covenant with all the other members in Barth's sense of I-Thou. Since there are limits to covenantal relationship, we must ask ourselves some serious but practical questions on how the people and pastor (as administrator) can be a covenantal congregation.

When we turn to Barth for direct answers, we find none. Barth is concerned with I-Thou covenantal being in its form and leaves the specific content for us. If a complete covenant relationship implies that I must be <u>fully</u> open and completely available to everyone, I would probably break under the strain! But because I have limitations I must limit the number of full-covenant relationships I have to a few persons and limit the extent of covenant I wish to engage in with others.

Louis H. Evans, Jr., pastor of a large church in Washington,
D. C., discusses this very issue in his recent book, <u>Creative Love</u>.

His model for covenantal being in Jesus.

If anyone could have ministered to the whole world, it was Jesus Christ. Yet, he chose to make himself uniquely available to only twelve persons—'And he appointed twelve, to be with him...' (Mark 3:14, italics added)—doing his work through them, rather than trying to meet all the needs of the multitudes. 14

To be sure, Jesus was committed to all persons, but the disciples "had a claim on his time as the crowds did not. There were occasions when

¹⁴Louis H. Evans, Jr., Creative Love (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1977), 41.

he left the crying multitudes on the beach and sought out times with his disciples." This does not mean that the multitudes were unimportant or that Jesus was an exclusivist, but in terms of his humanity, Jesus, like us, was limited by time and human endurance. Thus he chose to share his ministry with others through the twelve.

There are limits to covenantal relationship in the fully committed sense of the term. In the life of every pastor there are people with whom she/he may want to enter into a very time and energy consuming covenantal relationship. Our spouse and our family, where applicable, would certainly be on the list of intimate relationships. Also, from my perspective, those fellow-workers on the church staff should be people for whom the pastor should be available in covenantal, I-Thou relationship. Perhaps key members of the church or members of actual covenantal groups would also be in intimate covenant relationship with the pastor. These persons are a first tier of covenantal relationships. Having these close relationships does not mean we have an attitude of exclusion to the rest of the congregation or the world. "Rather, when we are called to minister to the world, we can give all the more, because we have received so fully from the(se) covenant relationships."

A second tier of covenantal relationships for the pastor would be those persons for whom he/she labors in ministry. With these persons the covenant is not of the same intensity as the covenant with family or the few other special persons. As I look over the vows I took at ordination, I see coming through a set of promises to live and serve the

^{15&}lt;sub>Tbid., 25.</sub> 16_{Tbid., 26.}

church and others faithfully and with energy and intelligence, but the commitment I made leaves room for other life-commitments, too. Thus, the covenant which a pastor makes to the congregation is limited by sheer human limitation and by other wants and needs as well. Obviously we should not see ministry as a legal contract of so much time and work for so much pay. But at the same time, we need to realize our limits and the limitation built into the covenantal relationship of a pastor with the whole congregation.

The saving way out of this dilemma is our realization that each member of the church covenants, as a part of membership, to serve the other members. As a pastor I do not try to go it alone. Covenantally speaking, we need each other to fulfill the whole task of ministry. Thus, I try to engage others in the task of ministry—to take up their part of our covenant to serve Jesus Christ. Modeling is one way to teach this concept. Being in covenant with special persons and maybe a covenant group as such and encouraging others to be involved in covenant relationships or groups is a second way. Having openness and showing concern and fulfilling my part of the covenant I have as a pastor to the congregation is yet another way toward becoming a covenantal congregation. Emphasizing the inate covenantal nature and value of all church members to covenant to be the church in its specific setting and calling is yet another way to bring home the importance of being a covenantal congregation.

If the pastor develops a covenantal "style" of leadership, and is faithful in personal and professional life to covenantal being, the congregation will be greatly encouraged to see itself in covenantal

union with the pastor(s), with each other, and with God.

D. Consequences of Covenantal Administration to the Congregation

Now, let us suppose that the pastor of a congregation has developed the art of being a covenantal administrator. What might the consequences be for the congregation? The consequences which I see are really implicit in Barth's covenantal theology and, in a real sense, we have been at work answering this question throughout the paper.

A first major consequence of covenantal administration is that the task of administration will become humanized. John Powell reminds us that "human life has its laws, one of which is: We must use things and love people." And yet all to often "it is possible for the program and its fulfillment to become the goal, rather than the individuals for whose growth the program is intended. But a covenantal approach to administration will guard against using people as a means to program ends because covenant is first and foremost a relational, personoriented approach to administrative problems. It sees persons in I-Thou encounter and views their fulfillment within a covenantal togetherness.

A second consequence which leads from the humanizing process is the whole area of improved administration because of mutuality. We are

¹⁷ John Powell, Why Am I Afraid To Tell You Who I Am? (Niles, IL & Argus Communications, 1969), 49.

Paul E. Irion, "Administrative Efficiency vs. Personal Catastrophe," <u>Pastoral Psychology</u>, VIII (September 1957), 18.

together and we need each other to fulfill our lives and common ministry. Remember the important observation Barth makes in the exegesis of Genexis 2: In isolation the man was not made good--he needed a partner. Barth's understanding of covenant teaches that God wills to be our partner and that our fellow humans are also potential covenantpartners and we become human as we enter into partnership with others. The whole discussion on seeing, hearing and speaking, actions, and "gladly" has to do with mutual expression and finding one's self in the other. Pastoral administration must not miss the truth of our covenantal being. Positively stated, pastoral administration that understands this point will have the success of fulfillment and joy in the sharing of persons within the administrative task with so many favorable results. Where mutuality is emphasized in this Barthian I-Thou sense, communication improves; it becomes more honest, direct and open. If we learn to really "see" each other there will develop openness and insight in our perception. If we hear and then speak, the good listening will mean we learn better how to respond to others. When I really do encounter the other in gladness. I make a compelling invitation to the other person to do the same to me. Imagine the impact that mutuality can have on members of a congregation to recognize their invaluable importance to God, the church, and to themselves! In turn, the administrative task which depends so upon good understanding among persons will be greatly helped.

The covenantal concern for mutuality means, in the context of ministry, that many people, not just the pastor, will take a stake in

serving Christ through the church. Covenantal pastoral administration not only understands the theological correctness of this position, it works to encourage it! Truly in the deepest sense we are together and do need each other to do the whole task of ministry. It is the pastor who works in isolation, who does not understand the stake which all members have in serving the cause of Christ. Sharing in ministry is aided by sharing in honest communication. Donald Smith writes:

The best hope for reduction of role conflict and ambiguity is in the opening of 'honest communication between the clergy with their theological expectation of people and the people with their "organizational expectations" of clergymen. 19

Honest mutual communication can serve the interests of pastoral administration by guarding not only against misunderstandings which cause role conflict and ambiguity, but it can also guard against uninformed or ill-advised executive decisions and unacceptable attitudes and styles of leadership because people will take interest in their mutual ministry and, given a sense of covenantal trust and support, will honestly express their opinions of pastoral leadership to the pastor. In short, mutual ministry means people help each other to best serve the needs of the whole congregation, the greater church, and the world.

Covenantal pastoral administration takes others seriously and encourages others to be in leadership positions. Like one of the virtues of democratic leadership, covenantal administration which allows others a share in ministry, not only develops good present lay-leadership, it strives to develop leadership which will guide and support the church

¹⁹Donald P. Smith, <u>Clergy in the Cross Fire</u> (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1973), 89.

when the pastor is absent or gone. The vacuum left by a vacant pastor is less noticable when many have a share in the leadership process.

Covenantal pastoral leadership which takes its lead from a biblical approach such as Barth's, will be able to make provision for positive qualities of group dynamics such as mutual trust and support and provisions for mistake-making and forgiveness. Such provisions instill confidence, security, and creative risk in those who make congregational decisions. Certainly a high degree of trust would be present in a congregation which practiced Barth's elements of encounter. Out of trust would also come pockets of solid support for the church leadership. Moreover, a covenantal administrative theology which recalls the loving way of Yahweh with Israel would positively affirm the value of forgiveness in the face of mistakes made from either pastor or congregational members. The "binding" element of a covenantal congregation would be, in part, this ability to withstand stress and anxiety because the community had learned to forgive and to keep the covenant in times of strain.

Covenantal understanding within the whole congregation could also deepen the church's self-understanding and give impetus to the congregation for keeping its end of the covenant to serve Jesus Christ.

Many churches suffer from an institutional blight.

You're asking what is the source of the problems facing this parish? That's an easy question! There is no doubt but that all of our problems here at St. Timothy's grow out of the fact that most of our members don't take their membership vows seriously. They seem to

have forgotten that when they became members of this congregation they promised to support the church by their prayers, their presence, their service, and their gifts.²⁰

When people do not take their membership vows seriously, it is often because they do not see what the vows mean in the life of the church or to the individual. Sometimes they feel unimportant or believe that their voice will not be heard. All too often their fears are well-founded! But I believe the witness of covenantal Christians and the spirit of a covenantal congregation would do much to reverse the trend of apathy and indifference among so many churches today. The administrative process would be greatly helped in exact proportion to the positive, changed attitudes of the people in the pew.

From the Barthian perspective, a final consequence of covenantal, pastoral administration concerns the whole issue of pastoral authority. The covenant between persons is possible because God is first covenantal with himself and out of his gracious freedom wills to covenant with us through Jesus Christ. Likewise, authority in pastoral administration stands under the sign of a greater authority. The voice of authority is not ultimately the pastor or any member of the congregation—"the voice which has to be heard is that of Jesus Christ...He is the Head, the Living Lord of the community." It is possible to build trust, support, openness, care, mutual ministry and other fruits of covenantal relationship—and still not be distinctively Christian. Barth writes: "Where two or three are gathered together in the name of Jesus they will mutually recognise and acknowledge that they are those

²⁰Lyle E. Shaller, <u>Parish Planning</u> (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966), 19.

21IV, 2, 682.

who are gathered by Him as their one Lord, and regard and receive one another as brothers because they are all brothers of this First-begott-on." When our pastoral authority is the authority of Christ, then the covenantal meaning of our togetherness will be Christian and our administrative work in the church will be for its "up-building."

Not all administrative problems are the fault of the pastor. Remember in covenant ministry that partners are involved. When we know more clearly what is expected in the covenant, have it modeled before us by our pastoral leader(s), are affirmed and supported in our mutual service in ministry, believe all have a stake in the ministry, and remember that our final authority is Jesus Christ as Head of the church; when we know that our fellows will be supportive in those times when we have drifted from our covenantal commitments, when we have learned to love and share and grow together, the congregation will flourish with vigor and health. Members will know where they stand and why. Covenantal being and covenant relationship truly offer great hope for the church of the future.

²²IV, 2, 701.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The preparation and writing of this dissertation have proved to be very worthwhile for me. I have come to appreciate the theology of Karl Barth and I have learned some important insights into pastoral administration. At the same time, these studies have been important for insight into the rich concept of covenant and the contemporary interest in interpersonal relationships especially as they effect the life of the church and its administrative process.

Next steps for me include trying to put into practice some of the implications of Barth's concept of covenant as they apply to my particular work as a pastor and administrator. I want to develop more effective means of communication, deeper personal relationships, and more effective church committees. Consequently, I hope to continue improving my skills in working with people as part of what I can do to fulfill my part of the covenant between us.

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APPENDIX

The following sermon was one I delivered at the Service of Installation for the Reverend Lawrence Corbett at Westminster United Presbyterian Church, Phoenix, Arizona, on May 1, 1977. One of the reasons I was priviledged to give the sermon is that I worked with the Pastor-seeking Committee which was charged with finding a pastor for the vacant church. The sermon is enclosed because it was one attempt by me to deal with Barth's understanding of covenant as applied to ministry. This is but one of the many ways to grapple with the rich metaphor of covenant as developed in the Church Dogmatics, particularly in Volume III, Part 2.

"A COVENANT MINISTRY"

a sermon by

Gary R. Hindman

SCRIPTURE: I Timothy 4:6-16

TEXT: "Set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity." I Tim. 4:12b

I'm honored to be with you this morning in this most special time in the life of Westminster Church. I have truly enjoyed working with the dedicated people of your Pastor Nominating Committee, and I am thrilled with your fine choice of Larry Corbett as your new pastor!

This morning I want to talk with you about covenant ministry. We are a covenant-making people. Witness the fact that 13,241 persons applied for marriages licenses in Maricopa County last year! Marriage is a covenant between two parties. Some see the marriage covenant only in a legalistic way, and when they think they no longer need each other, they take steps to dissolve the marriage. People are also covenant-breakers. 15,084 persons filed domestic relations suits, suits for divorce, in Maricopa County in 1976.

Last Tuesday Barbara and I stood before a judge of the District Court...NOT TO GET A DIVORCE! Before him we swore a covenant to raise our little Christa to the best of our ability. And the judge awarded us legal custody of the little person who has come to be so important to our lives. Parenting is another kind of covenant; it goes deeper than the mere legal obligation to be a parent. We intend to love and care and share our lives with our daughter without counting the cost.

There are many kinds of covenants mentioned in the Bible. There are covenants between weaker and stronger nations; there are covenants between kings and holy leaders; some covenants are paternalistic and others maternalistic. And there is the great covenant which began with the promise of the LORD God to Abraham, which was kept down through the history of Israel and through Jesus to all human beings everywhere... a covenant of God's grace and mercy to his chosen ones.

I believe at its very best the gospel ministry of Jesus Christ is covenant ministry. This morning I would like to explain what I think is meant by the term "covenant ministry."

First, let us consider what covenant ministry is not. It is not an "I-can-do-it-without-you" affiar. It is not ministry of the pastor, by the pastor, for the pastor. It is worth mentioning at this point that your Pastor-seeking Committee and the Apostle Paul were on the same wave-length on this issue. Paul was constantly reminding Timothy in our Scripture lesson of his duty, responsibility and obligation to serve others in ministry. Likewise, your Pastor-seeking

Committee was constantly looking through dossiers with the criterion in mind that a good pastor is not one that constantly writes about his or her accomplishments as if they were to the glory of the pastor and not to the glory of God and the church!

A covenant takes two parties; it cannot function with a committee of one. No significant ministry has ever taken place in a vacuum. No important service in the name of Christ was ever rendered from the ramparts of an ivory tower. And in my opinion no pastor who tries to build an empire really understands ministry as covenant.

A covenant ministry is not exclusively a ministry of the pastor, nor is it a ministry that abuses the pastor's leadership or personhood. If the congregation is too impatient or too demanding, they can sap the creativity and vitality right from the pastor. But a more common way to abuse the pastor's leadership is to use the pastor as a token Christian, or the pastor's family as a token Christian family. As I understand Paul's advice to Timothy to set the example, it is because the congregation is already practicing the Christian faith and they will expect Timothy, their new, young pastor, to do likewise. He may set the standard but more to the point, he is part of the standard.

Covenant ministry is not strictly a ministry by the pastor or by the congregation. Rather, it takes seriously both God's call to the pastor and God's call to the parishoner. Both are involved in a covenant ministry, but the issue is how they are involved.

This brings us to a second point: They are involved in an intimate relationship with each other. Covenant ministry is a ministry of intimate encounter of the "I-Thou." I-Thou is not I-it. We are not involved in using each other; we are involved in fulfilling one another through Christian service. The late, great Swiss theologian, Karl Barth, has outlined four vital elements to intimate encounter; I think they are essential to covenantal ministry. (1) Being in encounter is where one person looks the other "in the eye." (III, 2, 250) When we see another we not only see them, they see us as well and we know also that we are being seen. We get insight into another. We establish a place where encounter takes place. In other words, we establish an openness.

The church today and its leadership must do right without being righteous; it must make sound judgements without being judgemental; it needs to witness to its special calling without exclusion to others because of age, sex, or race. Covenant ministry which takes I and Thou seriously is of necessity open. When Paul advised Timothy on how to teach, he said "put these instructions before them"...not dogmatically, not belligerently, not in an ordering or condescending way, for such attitudes ruin human relationships. "Set them before them"..counsel them, advise, help, assist them, point out, suggest. Such are the ways of a ministry of openness.

(2) Barth adds that being in encounter is a rendering of "mutual speech and hearing." (III, 2, 252) It is not enough to see the other person and be seen. The I needs to explain himself to the Thou and the Thou needs to understand the I and visa versa. A covenant ministry is a listening ministry for we really learn to serve by listening; and it is a speaking ministry for we really impart the truths of our faith and ourselves, and are then teaching elders, when we speak. Speaking and hearing come from both sides—from pastor and congregation. "Set the believers an example in speech and conduct."

In the past 18 months I have come to know a certain member of my congregation during her chronic and fatal bout with cancer. She was a wife and mother of three, in her early fifties, perennially optimistic and of great courage. I remember the last time we talked in which she was fully lucid. I entered the room and saw her and she saw me. And she saw that I could see the terrible copper look in her eyes and skin, a look caused by the toxins in her struggling body. And she knew that I knew that the cancer was winning the hard-fought battle which would soon be over. We greeted each other and she began to speak of her pain and agony; and I listened and I heard her saying more than that. I heard her strength, her courage, her great testimony of faith. The I-Thou: Seeing, speaking, hearing.

- assistance in the act of being." (III, 2, 260) It is not only that we are open and listen and speak--but moreover, we are called, in the I-Thou encounter, to do for the other. "Set the believers an example in speech and conduct," says Paul by doing acts of love, by witnessing to your faith, by the expression of pure living. Barth writes: "My action is human when the outstretched hand of the other does not grope in the void but finds in mine the support which is asked." (III, 2,264) And that is just what happened back at the hospital after we saw and spoke and listened. I took her out-stretched hand in mine and we prayed together about the goodness of God and the joy of her loved ones, and the great privilege of life. And after that, there was silence for a long time as we held on to each other.
- (4) The fourth ingredient to intimate encounter is absolutely essential to seeing, speaking and hearing, and acting: Being in encounter consists in the fact that all these occurences which are done are "done on both sides with gladness." (III, 2, 265) Ministry not done in joy would not be complete; it would not be effective; it would not be Christian.

When Barth speaks of encounter in gladness, he does not mean everything is always "coming up roses;" he does not mean that we can not be serious and sad at times; but there is a deep sense of freedom and joy in the gladness of Christian service and duty. I never really understood the meaning of joy in Hebrews 12:2 so well as I do now. "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the JOY that was set before him..." (did some impossibly hard and difficult

tasks!)... "endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God." Also remember the Apostle Paul writing his joyful letter to the Philippians while in a Roman prison. There is deep Christian joy, even in the face of trial and ordeal, when we minister and are ministered to, gladly.

A covenantal ministry is not done without the other. A covenantal ministry is at best an intimate encounter of the I-Thou which is marked by openness, a mutual speaking and hearing, mutual assistance in the act of being, and, it is done gladly. But there is even more to a ministry of covenant than human encounter, for the covenant ministry is modeled after another covenant, the great covenant of God and his chosen people, a covenant which was perfectly demonstrated in the ministry of Jesus Christ.

This brings us to the final point of looking at the marks of a covenantal ministry as it corresponds to our understanding of Christian covenant. First, there is a history involved. There was a preparation for the ministry of Larry Corbett and Westminster Church, Phoenix. Larry received a call to Christian ministry. He went to seminary to study, grow and learn. He served other churches. Now he and his family have accepted the call to come here. And there was a preparing by this church. There was the wonderful, solid ministry of Don Leavett. There was the able interim ministry of Douglas Tiffany. And there were the countless hours of work and preparation to seek and find a candidate by the Pastor-seeking Committee. Over 120 dossiers were studied and re-studied; all were taken seriously and no candidate was overlooked because of race or sex. The committee had a sense of mission and should be commended for their dedicated work. Finally, in and through all this history, was the anchoring, stabilizing, connecting influence of the Presbytery of Grand Canyon and the greater United Presbyterian Church.

Next, there is a context. We have been talking about the context. Covenant ministry takes persons æriously and encounters them. Here the encounter is between Larry Corbett and Westminster Church and their greater connections. The covenant here is the same covenant that confronted Timothy and his church...a covenant to minister and serve in the name of Jesus Christ. It is a context of witnessing, loving, caring, serving, sharing, touching, listening, learning, and teaching in and through Christ and the Word of God. There is a history, there is a context, and finally, there is also a future to this covenant history.

There is a future because God's covenant has tenacity. Hosea tells us that the covenant of God stood even after Israel played the Harlot! Such an understanding is quite different from the legalistic contract that some people have of modern marriage. Some churches would like a pastor under thirty with 25 years of experience who can work equally well with children, youth, singles, couples, and senior citizens; someone who can teach, preach, sing, dance, and play the fiddle! Larry

is a talented man. But even if he cannot deliver all the goods, the covenant still stands because the covenant is not a legal contract, it is at best an intimate relationship. As partners, you will surely complete the ministry of which Larry is pastor as you share yourselves in Christian service together!

One final point is that there is a future to covenantal ministry because the covenant is grounded in God and God is a God of hope. He is not through with us yet! There is still more to learn, more service to do, more to share. If yours is a covenant ministry of pastor and parish, you will be richly blessed by the Spirit of God working among you. May God make it so! Amen!